

EXECUTIVE SESSION

PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE,
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
WASHINGTON, D.C.

INTERVIEW OF: HOPE HICKS

Tuesday, February 27, 2018

Washington, D.C.

The interview in the above matter was held in Room HVC-304, Capitol Visitor Center, commencing at 10:07 a.m.

Present: Representatives Conaway, King, LoBiondo, Rooney, Ros-Lehtinen, Wenstrup, Stewart, Gowdy, Stefanik, Hurd, Schiff, Himes, Sewell,

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Carson, Quigley, Swalwell, Castro, and Heck.

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Appearances:

A series of 12 horizontal black bars of varying lengths, arranged vertically, resembling a bar chart or a decorative pattern. The bars are of different widths and are separated by white space.

For HOPE HICKS:

ROBERT P. TROUT

GLORIA B. SOLOMON

CHRIS HATEFIELD D

TROUT CACHERIS & JANIS PLLC

1350 CONNECTICUT AVENUE NW

SUITE 300

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██████████ All right. Let's get started.

Good morning, everybody. This is the committee's interview of Hope Hicks.

Thank you for speaking to us today.

For the record, my name is ██████████ I am ██████████ for the majority here at the House Intelligence Committee. There are other members and staff present who will introduce themselves as the proceedings get underway. But before we get started, I just wanted to share a few things for the record.

The questioning will be conducted by the committee members and staff. During the course of this interview, each side may ask questions during their allotted time period.

Some questions may seem basic, but that is because we need to clearly establish facts and understand the situation. Please do not assume we know any facts that you have previously disclosed as part of any other investigation or review.

This interview will be conducted at the unclassified level.

During the course of this interview, we will take any breaks that you desire.

We ask that you give complete and fulsome replies to questions based on your best recollection. If a question is unclear or you're uncertain in your response, please let us know. And if you do not know the answer to a question or cannot remember, simply say so.

You're entitled to have counsel present with you during this interview, and I see that you have brought them with you.

At this time, if counsel could please introduce themselves for the record.

MR. TROUT: Yes. Robert Trout of the firm of Trout Cacheris & Janis.

MS. SOLOMON: Gloria Solomon, Trout Cacheris & Janis.

MR. HATFIELD: Chris Hatfield, Trout Cacheris & Janis.

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■■■■■ Thanks very much.

The interview will be transcribed. As you can see, there are reporters making a record of these proceedings so we can easily consult a written compilation of your answers at a later date.

Because the reporter cannot record gestures, we ask that you answer all questions verbally. If you forget to do this, you will be reminded to do so. You may also be asked to spell certain terms or unusual phrases.

Consistent with the committee's rules of procedure, you and your counsel, upon request, will have a reasonable opportunity to inspect the transcript of this interview in order to determine whether your answers were correctly transcribed. The transcript will remain in the committee's custody, and the committee also reserves the right to request your return for additional questions should the need arise.

The process for the interview will be as follows. The minority will be given 45 minutes to ask questions. Thereafter, the majority will be given 45 minutes to ask questions.

We will take a 5-minute break if you desire, after which time the minority will be given 15 minutes to ask questions and the majority will be given 15 minutes to ask questions. These 15-minute rounds of questioning will continue until all questioning has been exhausted by both sides.

To ensure confidentiality, we ask that you do not discuss this interview with anyone other than your attorneys. You are reminded that it is unlawful to deliberately provide false information to Members of Congress or staff.

And, lastly, the record will reflect that you are voluntarily participating in this interview, which will be under oath.

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Ms. Hicks, could you please raise your right hand to be sworn?

Do you solemnly swear that your testimony you're about to give is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

MS. HICKS: I do.

██████████ Thank you very much.

And a reminder for you all, if you could just make sure your microphone's green light is turned on, and pull the microphone closer to you so the recorder can hear what you're saying.

Over to you, Mr. Chairman, for any opening remarks.

MR. ROONEY: Thanks, ██████████

Ms. Hicks, welcome.

And I'll turn it over to Adam, 45 minutes.

MR. SCHIFF: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, Ms. Hicks.

Before I turn it over to my colleague Mr. Himes to start our questions, I wanted to ask as a threshold matter whether you've been instructed by the executive to invoke privilege as to any of the questions we'll be asking you today.

We've had some of the administration witnesses who have come in and testified broadly about their time during the campaign, during the transition, and during the administration, and others who have made very sweeping claims of privilege. Is your expectation that you'll be invoking privilege today as to any set of questions?

MR. TROUT: Mr. Schiff, let me try to answer that question.

We received the invitation from the committee on January 8, I believe it was, and immediately reached out to the committee and also reached out to the

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White House staff.

I was provided with a statement of the parameters of the investigation, which focused on the Russian active measures targeting the 2016 election, which ended November 8.

In my conversations, and I've stayed in touch with committee staff as well as with White House counsel, including as recently as yesterday, obviously this is a voluntary interview, but Ms. Hicks is a White House employee, and as such, she is going to follow the directions of the White House.

And my understanding of those instructions are that she is not to answer questions regarding conversations or events that happened after the election. So she is -- neither she nor I are responsible for the issue of executive privilege. That rests with the White House and White House counsel. But she is a White House employee, and she's going to follow the instructions of the White House.

MR. SCHIFF: And just so that we're clear, because, as I mentioned, we've had other administration witnesses who served both during the campaign as well as transition and into the administration who have not invoked privilege along those lines -- Mr. Bannon was the first to invoke such a broad claim of privilege -- has your client been instructed by the White House to invoke privilege as to any questions concerning events that took place during the transition or during her time in the administration?

MR. TROUT: I think it is the position of the White House -- first of all, her instructions are, and I think this is designed to protect the privilege, not necessarily to say that any question that could be asked is privileged, but I believe it is the view of the White House that because anything after Election Day might involve privileged communications, that she is under instructions not to answer any

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questions regarding conversations or events after the election.

To the extent that -- and this has been part of the conversation that we've been having, both with committee staff as well as White House counsel, you know, are there some questions that we should get in advance so that the White House could screen what is in bounds and what is out of bounds or at least in their view.

And my understanding is, is that there's been very little communication between the committee staff and White House counsel on that in terms of trying to, you know, triage, if you will, questions.

And as a result, at this point, she is simply -- it's not a question of invoking the privilege. It is really a question of abiding by the instructions that she has received from her employers to the answers that she's -- or the questions she's allowed to answer.

MR. SCHIFF: Counsel, it sounds like what you're saying then is you have not been instructed to invoke privilege. You've merely been instructed to refuse to answer questions. We don't recognize that as a valid claim of privilege.

Mr. Bannon made much the same argument, and he was served with a subpoena during his attendance. It would be my recommendation, if that's your position, that Ms. Hicks be served with a subpoena today during her appearance, and if Ms. Hicks were to persist, as Mr. Bannon has, that we pursue contempt, as I hope and believe we will with Mr. Bannon.

I would also say that I would expect that we'll follow the same procedure that we did with Mr. Bannon; that is, we will ask questions about the period during the campaign. We'll ask questions about the period during the transition and during the administration.

The witness can refuse to answer whatever questions that you choose,

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Ms. Hicks. But it certainly would be my recommendation that we follow the same process we followed with Mr. Bannon when he made an identical argument.

MR. TROUT: Well, I understand that that's your position. And I can simply say that, as a White House employee, she is going to follow the instructions of her employer, and those instructions are not to answer questions regarding conversations or events that occurred after the election.

MR. SCHIFF: Okay.

Mr. Himes.

MR. HIMES: Thank you.

And thank you, Ms. Hicks, for being here this morning.

We're going to start off with a series of questions that are more about process than about substance. And let me begin with just a couple of questions about your representation, starting with whether you are aware of whether your counsel represents other individuals connected to this committee's Russia investigations.

MR. TROUT: Why is that relevant?

MR. HIMES: We're interested in knowing whether the witness has entered into any sort of joint defense arrangements, whether she's signed a notice or waiver of conflict of interest, so we sort of understand the parameters of her testimony today.

MR. TROUT: She's not going to talk about conversations that she has had with counsel.

MR. HIMES: Okay. So you're not -- we're interested in knowing whether the witness is either formally or informally party to joint defense, common interest, information-sharing agreements. We're also interested in knowing whether the witness has signed a notice or waiver of conflict of interest. So the witness is not

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going to answer those questions?

MR. TROUT: That's correct.

MR. HIMES: Okay. Let's move on then.

And I assume the basis for not answering that question is attorney-client privilege, or is there --

MR. TROUT: It's privileged, and it's not relevant, and she's just not going to answer that question.

MR. HIMES: Well, just to be clear, there is no relevancy basis that can be used to refuse to answer questions.

MR. TROUT: Well --

MR. HIMES: Do we agree on that point?

MR. TROUT: Well, so when -- just so you know, when prosecutors ask me that question, I tell them it's none of their business.

MR. HIMES: This is, of course, not a courtroom.

MR. TROUT: I understand that.

MR. HIMES: So just so we can understand parameters upfront, are you claiming relevancy as a standard upon which to exclude the committee's questions?

MR. TROUT: What I'm really saying is, is that I'm -- suggest -- she's not going to answer that question. I'm telling her not to answer that question.

MR. HIMES: Okay. We may have to come back to the basis for that assertion, but I do want to make some progress here.

MR. TROUT: Okay.

MR. HIMES: Ms. Hicks, have you been interviewed by the special counsel's office?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

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MR. HIMES: How many times?

MS. HICKS: Twice.

MR. HIMES: In those interviews --

MR. TROUT: Let me just clarify that it was one occasion, 2 days.

MR. QUIGLEY: I'm sorry. We can't hear you down here.

MS. HICKS: Sorry.

MR. TROUT: It was one occasion, 2 days.

MS. HICKS: Two days.

MR. TROUT: In other words, it was back to back.

MR. HIMES: Okay. In those interviews, did you make the equivalent assertion of preservation of executive privilege that you have made before the committee today?

It's a factual question, Mr. Trout.

MR. TROUT: She is not going to talk about what happened in her interview with Mr. Mueller.

MR. HIMES: Okay. So as I just did, let me ask you for the basis upon which you're instructing the witness not to answer that question.

MR. TROUT: She's just not going to answer questions about her testimony before her interview with the special counsel.

MR. HIMES: Okay. I'm going to concur with the ranking member's recommendation that, as we did in the case of Mr. Bannon, we ask that we seek a subpoena. And, Mr. Trout, as you know, congressional committees recognize and exclusively recognize constitutional privileges but not testimonial privileges.

So just let me go on record concurring with the ranking member that we need some clarity on what sorts of privileges and standards will be invoked to refuse to

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answer questions to this committee. But, again, I'm interested in getting to the substance of the interview, so perhaps we can revisit that question.

Ms. Hicks, have you been interviewed by other congressional committees?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. HIMES: Which ones?

MS. HICKS: The Senate Intelligence Committee.

MR. HIMES: Okay. And when was that interview?

MS. HICKS: October 16, 2017.

MR. HIMES: Is that the only interview with that committee?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. HIMES: Okay. And there were no other committees that have sought your testimony?

MS. HICKS: That's the only committee that I've conducted an interview with.

MR. HIMES: Okay. Thank you.

Ms. Hicks, I want to ask a couple of questions about the production that the committee requested. We're in receipt of a letter from your attorney directing the committee to the Trump campaign transition and White House for any documents.

Ms. Hicks, have you reviewed the documents from the campaign, the transition, or from your time in the White House in preparation for your interview today?

MS. HICKS: I have seen some documents from the campaign in preparation for my interview today. My understanding is I'll only be asking questions about the time period up until the election, and, therefore, documents after that would not be relevant.

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MR. HIMES: So setting aside questions of production with respect to either the transition or the period of your employment at the White House, the committee is obviously interested in having a complete set of documents responsive to our request in our letter of January 8, 2018. We have, I don't believe, received any documents from you that are responsive to this request. Is that correct?

MR. TROUT: That's correct.

MR. HIMES: So, I guess, my question for you, Ms. Hicks, is, we had a broad request for documents. Can you represent to the committee that the documents that have been provided by the campaign and the White House are fully responsive to our request of January 8, 2018?

MR. TROUT: If I can respond to that, Congressman, my understanding is, is that the committee has received documents from the campaign. I believe that the special counsel has probably received similar sorts of documents. I don't know whether they are the identical set.

We have received from the campaign documents to assist counsel. We are not at liberty to turn over, by virtue of the ground rules under which we receive those documents, we're not at liberty to turn over documents. We assume that this committee does have the power to get documents and did receive documents.

So I don't know whether documents that we received are identical to the set of documents that you received. I can just tell you that we have received documents from the committee -- I mean, excuse me, from the campaign -- but under circumstances where we are not at liberty to just turn them over to other people.

MR. HIMES: To be clear, though, the committee is obviously interested in receiving from your client fully responsive production, and there's no reason to

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assume that the production that we have received from either the campaign or the White House is fully responsive. I'll get into some specific questions around this later, but that's the interest of the committee.

Ms. Hicks, how many personal email accounts do you have?

MS. HICKS: Currently one.

MR. HIMES: And what is that account?

MS. HICKS: It's a Gmail account.

MR. HIMES: Okay. What is the Gmail address?

MS. HICKS: It's [REDACTED].

MR. HIMES: Previously, extending back to the date of the requested production, which is January 1, 2015, looking back to January 1, 2015, looking backwards to that start date, were there other email accounts that you used?

MS. HICKS: Yes. I probably didn't create this account until sometime in the summer of 2015.

MR. HIMES: So prior to summer of 2015, there would have been a different personal email. And what would that different personal email be?

MS. HICKS: Probably some variation of the current email,

[REDACTED]
MR. HIMES: Did you go through with your attorney the email records again to January 1 of 2015 and those two accounts to look for emails that were responsive to our letter of January 8?

MS. HICKS: No. We didn't provide -- I didn't use my personal email for campaign-related activities. And anything that was campaign related on my personal email would have been by accident, like a pre-population, like if you send an article or something like that. We're happy to go back and take a look.

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I also had a Gmail address from, I believe, March 2015 to sometime in June of 2015 while we were in an exploratory committee phase. I used it primarily to distribute press releases, and I don't have access to it anymore.

It was basically just to create separation between my work for The Trump Organization where I was an employee and then a volunteer for the exploratory committee in that phase. But I wasn't communicating with other campaign members, I don't think. It was primarily just to send out press releases and things like that. I don't have access to it, but --

MR. HIMES: So you have made reference, I guess, if I'm keeping track right, to three personal email accounts that you used between January 1 of 2015 to the present date. Is that correct?

MS. HICKS: Well, this wouldn't have been a personal email account. It would have been a Gmail account that I was using for campaign-related activities before we were a campaign. So I have two personal email accounts that I've referenced, and one Gmail account that was used for campaign-related activities. But I don't have access to it.

MR. HIMES: Okay. Did you ever use any of these three accounts to communicate with individuals associated with the Trump campaign, the transition, or the White House, including Mr. Trump?

MS. HICKS: Mr. Trump doesn't email, so we can just put him over there. And, yes, I have communicated with individuals associated with the campaign via those email accounts.

MR. HIMES: Okay. So those communications have occurred, but I think you said previously that you hadn't looked, gone back and looked at those emails to determine if there were emails that would be responsive to Mr. Conaway's letter of

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January 8, 2018. So it would be the expectation of the committee that you would go back and look for responsive emails.

MS. HICKS: We're happy to do that. Like I said —

MR. HIMES: Sorry, we're going to have a problem with our transcriber if we talk over each other, so just, again, let me just -- and then I'll let you say what you're saying.

But it would be the expectation of the committee that to be responsive to Mr. Conaway's letter of January 8 that you would go back in those three accounts and see if there's responsive emails?

MS. HICKS: We're more than happy to do that. Like I said just a few minutes ago, any communications with other campaign officials would have been incidental, like a pre-population of an article link or something like that, and we are more than happy to provide that correspondence to the committee.

MR. HIMES: So to date, why has that search not occurred, and why have those documents not been provided to the committee?

MR. TROUT: I did not ask Ms. Hicks to do that. My assumption was is that you were looking for official campaign documents, and so that's what my response addressed.

MR. HIMES: Ms. Hicks, have you deleted emails from any of those three accounts to date?

MS. HICKS: Well, I don't have two of the accounts anymore, so I don't know what that means. I'm not a technologically savvy person. I don't know what happens to those accounts or the contents of them. And I don't -- I would have to go back and look at the current -- my current personal account. But I haven't permanently deleted anything. There's --

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MR. HIMES: And just to be clear, so we're talking about three accounts here. You continue to use one of them. And the other two accounts, did you actually delete those accounts or do you simply not use them anymore?

MS. HICKS: I don't know what the technological term for it is. But, yes, they're no longer active. One of them was hacked, so I don't have access to that anymore. It was a Gmail account that I've had — that I had since I -- probably since I graduated college for personal communications with family and other things, and then sort of like a dummy account that I use to send out press releases, like I described. And I deleted that account. I don't have access to it. But you're welcome to — I deleted it when I got an official Donald Trump for President campaign account in, you know, May or June.

MR. HIMES: Okay. So just to be clear, when you say you deleted that account, you actually went into the account and said delete this account. It's not that it's there and you don't use it, you actually took affirmative steps to delete the account?

MS. HICKS: That's right. I don't use the account, so I don't have any purpose for them.

MR. HIMES: Okay. Same questions with respect to text messaging. Did you ever use your personal phone and personal phone numbers to send text messages to Mr. Trump or others associated with the campaign?

MS. HICKS: Mr. Trump doesn't send or receive messages, so, again, put him -- and, yes, my personal phone was my means of communication during the campaign, so --

MR. HIMES: Okay. And have you made a search of those text messages to see if any of those text messages are responsive to the committee's request of

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January 8?

MS. HICKS: We have not.

MR. HIMES: Okay. Again, it would be the expectation of the committee that you would comply with the request of Mr. Conaway on January 8.

So you did say that you never exchanged text messages with Mr. Trump.

Did I hear that correctly?

MS. HICKS: That's right.

MR. HIMES: Okay. What cell phone number was candidate Trump during the campaign using?

MS. HICKS: I wouldn't know the number off the top of my head.

MR. HIMES: Can you provide that to the committee?

MR. TROUT: We'll take that under advisement.

MR. HIMES: Okay. Do you know what the carrier was used by candidate Trump during the campaign?

MS. HICKS: I don't. I know it was a Samsung phone.

MR. HIMES: Okay. But would you communicate with then-candidate Trump by cell phone? I know not text. You said not by text, but by phone?

MS. HICKS: Yes, we spoke on the phone.

MR. HIMES: Okay. Do you know if President Trump continues to use the same phone number that he used during the campaign?

MR. TROUT: Can we confer?

MS. HICKS: Sorry. Can we just go outside for a second?

[Discussion off the record.]

MS. HICKS: Should we wait or can I go ahead?

MR. HIMES: Oh, please, go ahead.

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MS. HICKS: I don't know the number that he uses now. I don't believe it's the same number that he was using during the campaign.

MR. HIMES: Okay. Thank you.

Let's talk for ■ second about private messaging apps, by which I mean apps like Signal, Wicker, WhatsApp. Have you ever used -- well, not ever. Have you, since January 1 of 2015, have you used private messaging apps?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. HIMES: Which ones?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall the names. I think maybe Confide (ph), that's the name of one.

MR. HIMES: Is that the only messaging app you used?

MS. HICKS: That's -- I think so, yes, sir.

MR. HIMES: Okay. Do you continue to use Confide (ph)?

MS. HICKS: No. No.

MR. HIMES: Okay. Have you gone back to review communications that are preserved on Confide (ph) to see if any of those communications are relevant to the committee's request?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. HIMES: Okay. Again, as I've been saying, we would expect that review to occur.

MR. TROUT: We'll take that under advisement.

MR. HIMES: Ms. Hicks, changing gears here a little bit, during this committee's interview with Donald Trump Jr., Mr. Trump acknowledged that he exchanged text messages with you in roughly July, June or July of 2017, on matters related to the public disclosure of Mr. Trump Jr.'s June 9 meeting in Trump Tower

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with ■ Russian lawyer and others. Do you recall exchanging text messages with Mr. Trump Jr.?

MS. HICKS: I don't believe that's in the scope of questions I'm here to answer today.

MR. HIMES: Well, it's --

MR. TROUT: That's right. She's been instructed by the White House not to discuss events or conversations that occurred after the election, and she's going to follow the instructions of her employer.

MR. HIMES: So I asked a question about a communication not with the President, not with an employee of the White House, but with Mr. Donald Trump Jr., who has no formal relationship other than the familial one with the executive.

MR. TROUT: Correct. And I think that this is a matter that you should take up with the White House counsel. But until she gets clarity from the White House counsel that she is authorized to answer any questions about events or conversations that occurred after Election Day, she's going to follow the instructions that she's been given.

MR. HIMES: So the White House has instructed your witness to refuse to answer questions about unrelated third-party conversations that happen to have occurred either during the transition or during the period of her employment at the White House?

MR. TROUT: No. The White House has instructed her to not answer questions about any conversations or events that occurred after Election Day.

MR. HIMES: With anybody?

MR. TROUT: With anyone. And if there are questions that on examination should be answered, frankly, I would have thought that would have been worked out

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between this committee and the White House in advance so that we would know what's in bounds and what's not in bounds.

But in the absence of that, she is not going to -- she's been instructed that she is not to answer questions relating to conversations or events after November the 8th, 2016.

MR. HIMES: Okay. We're going to have to obviously revisit that. You know, it's not our job to negotiate this with the White House. It is the White House's responsibility to assert privilege in specific, legally justifiable instances.

And I would anticipate the committee would continue to make these requests until the White House complies with its obligation to be clear about where it's exerting executive -- asserting executive privilege.

Ms. Hicks, I'm going to shift gears here a little bit maybe onto less controversial ground initially.

Can you tell the committee how you first became acquainted with the Trump family?

MS. HICKS: Sure. I was working at a PR firm in New York City, and one of my first clients was Ivanka Trump. I was hired primarily to help bolster her personal brand, which was -- she was just beginning to develop, in addition to managing her personal profile press as it was associated with her role as an executive at The Trump Organization and the overlap with her personal brand.

That work expanded to include corporate work for The Trump Organization, with their real estate and hotel portfolio, hospitality portfolio, golf, et cetera. And eventually I went to become the director of communications at The Trump Organization.

MR. HIMES: And I'm sorry, if I can just stop you there. Can you give us the

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dates of the move from the PR firm to working with Ivanka Trump?

MS. HICKS: Sure. I started with the PR firm in July of 2012 and immediately starting working with Ivanka Trump and left the PR firm to go to The Trump Organization. I was hired in August of 2014 and started in October of 2014.

MR. HIMES: Under what circumstances and where and when did you meet Donald Trump?

MS. HICKS: I met Mr. Trump in June of 2013 in Vancouver, Canada, British Columbia. We were actually – we got stuck in an elevator together. And periodically would see him at events and other Trump-related meetings while I was still at the PR firm but sort of broadening my portfolio to include more of their real estate assets.

MR. HIMES: So in June of 2013 you're working for the PR firm, you're also working for Mr. Trump's daughter, and you find yourself in Vancouver with Mr. Trump. What were the circumstances of that?

MS. HICKS: We were doing a ribbon cutting for the development – a new development project that they had there. It was sort of to initiate construction on the development, and it was a press day essentially.

MR. HIMES: So just so I understand the chronology, this is June of 2013. You said that you went to work for The Trump Organization in August of 2014?

MS. HICKS: That's right.

MR. HIMES: But you were in Vancouver for a Trump Organization event?

MS. HICKS: That's right. I said that when I started working for Ivanka, you know, initially it was for her personal brand, but my responsibilities became more broad. And I also worked on Trump Organization activities as well that were more corporate focused within their real estate, hospitality, and golf portfolios.

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MR. HIMES: Okay. Thank you.

How and when did you come to work for the Trump campaign?

MS. HICKS: So shortly after I started working at The Trump Organization, Mr. Trump mentioned that he was thinking about running for President. The first time he mentioned it to me was in late December of 2014. We were doing press to promote what would be the last season of "The Apprentice." And he mentioned at one of those events that this would likely be his last season of the show because he was going to run for President potentially.

The following month we were in Miami, Florida, at another hotel-related event, and Mr. Trump mentioned when we were meeting in the context of that event that in a few days he would be traveling to South Carolina for, I believe it was a Tea Party convention, something like that, and asked if myself and Amanda Miller, who's the vice president of marketing at The Trump Organization, would be willing to attend with him and sort of handle the PR surrounding that.

We both offered to do that. We ultimately weren't able to get there. We were traveling separately from Mr. Trump. And so we didn't end up attending.

Later that week, back in New York, at Trump Tower, Mr. Trump said, you know, we're going to Iowa this weekend. Would you like to come to Iowa?

MR. HIMES: And I'm sorry, what's the date on this conversation, the Iowa conversation?

MS. HICKS: This is probably January 21, 2015.

MR. HIMES: Okay.

MS. HICKS: Maybe 20th. And I agreed to go to Iowa, had no idea what I was going to Iowa for, and we spent the weekend, I believe the event was the Freedom Summit.

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MR. HIMES: So you, if I've got this correctly -- if I've got this correct, in late December of '14, Mr. Trump tells you that he's thinking about running for President. It will therefore -- and I don't know if you've seen this tweet, but it wouldn't surprise you that on -- in January of 2014 an individual by the name of Alfarova Yulia (ph) tweets, "I'm sure @RealDonaldTrump will be a great President. We'll support you from Russia. America needs an ambitious leader," exclamation point.

Have you seen that tweet?

MS. HICKS: I have not, no.

MR. HIMES: Okay. But by your own testimony, the President is publicly discussing at least with you the possibility of running for President in 2014?

MS. HICKS: This is January 2014?

MR. HIMES: Yeah.

MS. HICKS: I'm talking about December 2014, so that's --

MR. HIMES: Yeah. So you had not seen that tweet before?

MS. HICKS: I had not, no.

MR. HIMES: Okay.

MS. HICKS: And I think it's pretty public that Mr. Trump has considered running for President many times and went so far as to trademark his anticipated campaign slogan just days after Mitt Romney lost in 2012. So I don't think that conversations in 2014 about potentially running for President would have been a surprise to anybody.

I have not seen this tweet.

MR. HIMES: Okay. Thank you.

So in the period 2014, 2015, The Trump Organization is making some initial efforts to consider and possibly build a Trump Tower in Moscow. Were you

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involved in those considerations or efforts in any way?

MS. HICKS: I was not, no.

MR. HIMES: Were you aware of them?

MS. HICKS: Not at the time, no.

MR. HIMES: Okay. Do you know either of Michael Cohen or Felix Sater?

MS. HICKS: I know Michael Cohen. I know of Felix Sater. I've never met Felix.

MR. HIMES: Okay. Did you ever travel to Moscow -- well, let me start, have you ever traveled to Moscow?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. HIMES: You've never been to Moscow?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. HIMES: Or Russia?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. HIMES: Okay. So you are, just to review here -- and I'm sorry, refresh my memory. When did you formally become part of the Trump campaign?

MS. HICKS: So we went to Iowa, I think it was probably Friday, January 23, of 2015. We were there Saturday the 24th as well. And then when we returned to -- I returned to New York on the 24th and back in the office the following week, probably sometime around the 27th or 28th of January 2015.

We were having a conversation about the weekend, how it had gone, and Mr. Trump asked if I'd like to be the press secretary for his Presidential campaign.

MR. HIMES: So it was Mr. Trump that asked you to be specifically the press secretary?

MS. HICKS: That's right.

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MR. HIMES: Who did you report to at the time?

MS. HICKS: In what capacity?

MR. HIMES: Well, was there a formal org chart that had you reporting to Mr. Manafort, Mr. Lewandowski, anybody?

MS. HICKS: No. I reported -- within my role as the director of communications for The Trump Organization, I reported to Mr. Trump directly, and Ivanka, Don, and Eric Trump. Within the campaign, Corey Lewandowski was the campaign manager; Sam Nunberg was an adviser.

And it wasn't established who I was reporting to. I'm not big on structure. But I assumed that I would be reporting to the campaign manager and then obviously to Mr. Trump directly.

MR. HIMES: As the campaign developed going into Election Day, did at some point you begin to formally report to somebody, or were you always really, as a practical matter, reporting to Mr. Trump?

MS. HICKS: Look, the reality is, if you work for Mr. Trump you report directly to Mr. Trump, but certainly have superiors. Corey Lewandowski was the campaign manager and reported to him. But, you know, you're always reporting up to Mr. Trump.

MR. HIMES: Looking back on that period, and I suspect it evolved over time, but how often did you speak to Mr. Trump during the campaign?

MS. HICKS: Quite often. I guess it would depend if we were traveling or if we weren't. Are you asking how often I spoke to him during -- on the phone or --

MR. HIMES: Yeah. Yeah.

MS. HICKS: I'm not really sure what is the question.

MR. HIMES: Yeah. So let's just start with, you know, how often would you

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have talked to him by phone?

MS. HICKS: I'm sorry, the question is just very overbroad. Obviously, every day is different on a campaign. I spent most days with the candidate, whether we were in Trump Tower in New York or traveling on the road, and spoke to him when we weren't together, in the mornings, and at night often, mostly to discuss media coverage that he was watching in realtime.

MR. HIMES: Okay. So that would have been when you were actually physically present with Mr. Trump. If you were separate -- and I don't want to put words in your mouth, but would you characterize -- how -- and you said you didn't text or email, so presumably you would have spoken by phone?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. HIMES: Can you characterize how often you might have spoken by phone with Mr. Trump when you weren't physically present?

MS. HICKS: Like I just said, probably we would speak in the morning and in the evening. So, you know, twice a day.

MR. HIMES: Okay. Can you characterize for us the nature of your work for the campaign? And, again, I know it probably would have evolved quite a bit as you approached Election Day. But can you give us a sense of the nature of the work you were doing and how your duties evolved over that period?

MS. HICKS: Sure. So I was technically the press secretary. I fielded media requests and questions. I distributed information and announcements on behalf of the campaign.

I wouldn't say that I was a spokesperson, because I really let Mr. Trump, the candidate, speak for himself and sort of rarely found myself in a position to do so on his behalf. And ultimately, you know, was sort of a core member of the group that

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sort of started the campaign and ran through the primaries.

And there were relatively few of us, so we all took on a lot of different responsibilities. But essentially, mine was to manage the press operation, both on behalf of Mr. Trump, interviews that he wanted to do and other press-related activities, and then on behalf of the campaign as well.

████████████████████ Four minutes.

MR. HIMES: Thank you.

When you spoke with Mr. Trump by phone, would you typically call him? And, if so, would you call him on his cell phone, which we discussed earlier, or would he call you?

MS. HICKS: I don't know that there was a regular pattern established. We spoke to each other when we needed to speak to each other. So if I had a question or something to tell him and vice versa, the numbers that I spoke to him on were his cell phone number and his home phone number.

MR. HIMES: Okay. So, I guess, what I am getting at here is that you would call each other directly, not without the intercession of Ms. Graff or somebody?

MS. HICKS: That's right.

MR. HIMES: Okay.

MS. HICKS: Sometimes certainly there are occasions where Rhona would place a call through, but more often than not, we spoke to each other directly.

MR. HIMES: Would you typically travel with Mr. Trump when he was a candidate?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. HIMES: And was that mostly on his private plane?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

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MR. HIMES: Okay. Shifting gears a little bit here in the very limited time we have left in this segment, did you ever discuss Russia with Mr. Trump during the campaign?

MS. HICKS: That's a very broad question. Anything specifically?

MR. HIMES: Well, let me start with, did he ever express policy views with respect to Russia to you, things like we're doing it right, we're doing it wrong, the current President? So narrowing the question to policy questions.

MS. HICKS: Yeah, sure. I wouldn't consider that policy necessarily. But, sure, he would say privately what he has said publicly about the desire for a better relationship with Russia and that perhaps being something that could improve other aspects of our foreign policy and foreign relations.

MR. HIMES: Do you remember specific conversations about a desire for a better relationship with Russia?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall anything specifically now, but like I said, he's never said anything -- or the candidate never said anything to me privately that he has not expressed publicly, either in an interview or a rally, about his position there.

MR. HIMES: So moving off of policy, do you remember conversations in which Mr. Trump made mention of specific Russian individuals?

MS. HICKS: That's also broad. The only thing I can recall now is -- specifically is Putin. The first time I remember that being part of the discussion was when they were both on "60 Minutes" the same evening together.

██████████ One minute.

MS. HICKS: And then it came up a couple other times, again, things that all played out very publicly. You know, there was a complimentary statement made, I believe, by Mr. -- President Putin, and Mr. Trump reciprocated, those types of

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things. I don't recall any other specific Russian individuals.

MR. HIMES: Okay. Thank you. It sounds like we're out of time.

MR. ROONEY: Thank you, Ms. Hicks, for coming today.

Part of our investigation into the campaign and what Russia's active measures were during the campaign deal with a couple parameters that I'm sure that your attorneys made you aware of that I'd like to ask you specifically of, then there may be a couple other specific questions.

So during the campaign, were you aware of any Russian cyber activity or other active measures that were directed against the United States or its allies?

MS. HICKS: Only what I know of from – knew of at the time from media reporting.

MR. ROONEY: And what was that, if you remember?

MS. HICKS: The hack that took place. I believe that was made public sometime in June. And then obviously it became a much more significant story at the Democratic National Convention and sort of maintained its presence until the end of the election. But that's --

MR. ROONEY: And that was through the media?

MS. HICKS: Yes. Yes, sir.

MR. ROONEY: Were you aware of Russian active measures that included links between Russia and individuals associated with political campaigns or other U.S. persons?

MS. HICKS: Not at the time, no.

MR. ROONEY: So would that include obviously then the Trump campaign?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. ROONEY: And I'm just going to ask these three questions, if I could,

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with regard to that prong.

The active measures that linked Russia and the United States, you're saying that you're not aware of those links between political campaigns, to include the Trump campaign.

Is it your testimony that you're not aware of any collusion between the Trump campaign and the Russian Government?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. ROONEY: Is it your testimony that you're not aware of any conspiracy between the Trump campaign and the Russian Government to assist him on his Presidential election versus Hillary Clinton?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. ROONEY: Is it your testimony that you are unaware of any coordination between the Trump campaign and the Russian Government to assist him in the 2016 election cycle?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. ROONEY: Okay. Were you aware of what the U.S. Government's response to the Russian active measures were? If you don't know, that's --

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. ROONEY: Okay. Were you aware, or are you working currently, on what we need to do to protect ourselves and our allies in the future from such types of active measures?

MR. TROUT: Let me confer.

MR. ROONEY: Okay.

MS. HICKS: Yeah. I'm aware, but I'm a communication staffer, so I'm not somebody who would be developing those measures. I would be messaging those

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measures once they've been developed.

MR. ROONEY: Were you aware of -- during the campaign -- were you aware of leaks of classified information that took place regarding the Intelligence Community assessment of the matters surrounding the Russian involvement in the last campaign?

MS. HICKS: I don't believe I can speak to that. My knowledge would be from media reports, so --

MR. ROONEY: Okay. I'm going to ask you a couple questions about a couple people that we've talked a lot about over the last year.

First is Mr. George Papadopoulos. Do you know who he is?

MS. HICKS: I do.

MR. ROONEY: What was your impression of his role during the last campaign?

MS. HICKS: I don't believe I've ever met or spoken to him, and I don't believe he had a role in the campaign. My understanding was he attended this one meeting of a group of folks that were intended to be a foreign policy advisory committee for the candidate.

My understanding is they didn't convene on any other occasion. I don't know of any other occasion that Mr. Papadopoulos was advising the candidate indirectly or directly. And my communications with him were limited to email and were primarily about press requests.

I recall one specific communication where he asked if he could make an appearance on a television show to commentate on energy policy, and my response to him was that you're welcome to do whatever you feel you think is best in your personal capacity, but what you say and do are not representative of Mr. Trump or

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the campaign.

MR. ROONEY: How did he respond to that?

MS. HICKS: In agreement.

MR. ROONEY: Did you have any problem with him after that with regard to what he did or represented on behalf of the campaign or not?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall any interactions with him, any substantive interactions with him ever via email. It's possible. I just don't recall any.

MR. ROONEY: So with him, was there ever a time where you were worried that he was representing the campaign in a way that was different than the way that the Trump campaign actually wanted to be represented or --

MS. HICKS: You know, my concern was just generally for people -- that people were, as we expanded -- at this point, I believe, Mr. Trump had won the nomination, and we had a lot of people wanting to be surrogates or representing themselves as surrogates.

And I was only one person managing all of the press components of a Presidential campaign, including the surrogate operation. So my primary concern was trying to get a handle on all of the people going out on TV, how they were representing themselves, and making sure that what they were saying was aligned with Mr. Trump and what he had been saying.

I didn't know Mr. Papadopoulos, so my response to him was less specific to him and more something that I was saying to a lot of people that were now volunteering to go on TV and speak to different issues.

MR. ROONEY: Right. Well, I'm just trying to get an idea of who this guy was because a lot has been made of his influence on the campaign and the candidate.

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So in your -- with your role in the campaign and what you are aware of, what was Mr. Papadopoulos' influence on the candidate during the campaign with regard to his role on the campaign?

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[11:05 a.m.]

MS. HICKS: Again, I'm not aware of a role that he had.

MR. ROONEY: Did he talk to the President?

MS. HICKS: I'm only aware of the one meeting that's, you know, been sort of widely reported on. I don't believe we had any other conversations.

MR. ROONEY: And it's your impression that as the person that was in charge of the communication that he was not speaking on behalf of the Trump campaign in any way?

MS. HICKS: That's what I communicated to him. I don't know if he received instructions or directives from others on the campaign.

MR. ROONEY: What about with Carter Page, what was his -- what was his role on the campaign as far as you know?

MS. HICKS: Similar. He was named to this foreign policy advisory committee that met on that one occasion. I don't believe Mr. Page was even in attendance on that one occasion. I've never met or spoken to Mr. Page. We've exchanged emails in similar context to those of Mr. Papadopoulos, press inquiries, requests, ideas. He was -- I recall quite a few exchanges where he felt like he was being misrepresented by the press and wanted a chance to clarify that. It was my preference for him not to do that.

MR. ROONEY: Why not?

MS. HICKS: Because he was not involved or associated with the campaign. So I don't know why anybody would have a reason to go out and sort of define themselves and their role or lack thereof. It didn't seem like a priority for me. I had a couple of other things that I was juggling at the time.

MR. ROONEY: What kind of influence in your impression did he have on

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the President?

MS. HICKS: I don't believe they've ever spoken.

MR. ROONEY: So with Carter Page and George Papadopoulos, from what you're -- when you're testifying in your impressions during the campaign didn't have, aside from the one meeting with Mr. Papadopoulos, any interaction with the President or the candidate?

MS. HICKS: That's my understanding, yes.

MR. ROONEY: And in your role with what they were trying do with regard to the press, it sounds like to me that you were not crazy about them representing themselves as part of the -- I don't want to say part of the campaign because they were on these advisory committees, but that you did not feel comfortable with them speaking for the candidate. Is that correct? Is that what your testimony was?

MS. HICKS: That -- yes, that's my recollection of both of those individuals and my impression of them.

MR. CONAWAY: Just to follow up on that, to be clear. Would you recognize Carter Page on site during the campaign?

MS. HICKS: During the campaign, no. I've since seen him on TV.

MR. CONAWAY: How about George Papadopoulos?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. CONAWAY: As you traveled with candidate Trump throughout that process, did you ever see or hear anybody say that those guys were on the plane with the President or were at any common events, or were they ever actually physically near the President at any point in that campaign?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. CONAWAY: Thank you.

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MR. ROONEY: Trey? Peter.

MR. GOWDY: You sure?

MR. KING: After you.

MR. GOWDY: Good morning, Ms. Hicks.

Congressman Rooney used three words, collusion, coordination, and conspiracy. Do those three words have appreciably the same meaning to you? And if they do not, how would you distinguish them?

MS. HICKS: Rather than getting into defining those three words, I will just say that, to my knowledge, and I my experience on the campaign from the day it started until Election Day, there was -- I never saw, heard about, or participated in any activity or conversations about working with Russians or coordinating with Russians, colluding with Russians, conspiring with Russians. I never saw it. I never heard it. I never participated in it.

MR. GOWDY: I'm going to ask you similar questions to the ones that Congressman Rooney did, but maybe in a little less leading of a way or more open ended -- and no offense, but as a former prosecutor, he's just used to asking leading questions.

Regardless of the source, and regardless of whether or not you even believed what you heard -- so I'm giving you permission to engage in hearsay, double hearsay, quadruple hearsay, no matter the source, even if you didn't believe it, any evidence of collusion, coordination, conspiracy between candidate Trump and the Russian Government to interfere with, impact, influence the 2016 election at either the primary or general level.

MS. HICKS: No. I never saw, heard, experienced, participated in anything even closely resembling that.

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MR. GOWDY: All right. My question was specific with President Trump – then candidate Trump. I'm going to ask you the same question, but members of the campaign not named Donald Trump Sr., official campaign personnel, collusion coordination, conspiracy, regardless of the source of the evidence or regardless, frankly, of whether or not you believed it, any evidence, whatsoever, collusion, coordination, conspiracy, campaign, Russian government?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. GOWDY: Same question, but unofficial members of the campaign, folks who may have represented themselves as being part of the campaign, but were not, any evidence regardless of the source, collusion, coordination, conspiracy, between that person, him or her, and the Russian Government?

MS. HICKS: I don't believe I can speak as definitively to the behavior and activities of people that I'm not associated with, but again, I --

MR. GOWDY: I'm not asking you to speak to anything you don't know. I'm just asking you whether or not you know of it.

MS. HICKS: I wouldn't be able to answer that question. I don't know of any -- I don't know of any activity.

MR. GOWDY: When did you learn of the June 2016 meeting at Trump Tower between Mr. Trump Jr., others and Natalia Veselnitskaya?

MS. HICKS: So again, I'm here to answer questions up until Election Day. But just to move things along, I did not learn about that meeting until late June of 2017. I did not know about it at the time.

MR. GOWDY: You weren't told about it before it happened?

MS. HICKS: No, sir.

MR. GOWDY: You weren't told about it while it was happening?

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MS. HICKS: No, sir.

MR. GOWDY: You weren't told about it after it happened up to the day of the election.

MS. HICKS: That's correct.

MR. GOWDY: So if – hypothetically, if Steve Bannon had referred to that meeting as treasonous, did he ever make that comment in your presence?

MS. HICKS: No, sir.

MR. GOWDY: If hypothetically Steve Bannon would have said, there was a zero percent chance that the participants in that meeting were not walked up to then candidate Trump's office, do you have any insight into what Mr. Bannon says there is a zero percent chance it didn't happen?

MS. HICKS: No, sir.

MR. GOWDY: When he worked at the White House, did you ever -- you were the communications director?

MS. HICKS: I was not the communications director when Steve Bannon worked at the White House, no.

MR. GOWDY: What was your role when he worked there?

MS. HICKS: The director of strategic communications. Did a really good job.

MR. GOWDY: Are employees at the White House authorized to have off-the-record conversations with reporters?

MS. HICKS: I think that's a broad question. Generally speaking, I wouldn't say that's a practice that's encouraged. Certainly, things are a lot different at the White House now than they were when Steve Bannon worked there. But I would say that the chief strategist at the White House having an off-the-record

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conversation with a reporter, I don't know who would be there to tell him that that's not okay.

MR. GOWDY: Are you aware of any unauthorized, off-the-record conversations that Mr. Bannon had with reporters while he was employed at the White House?

MS. HICKS: I'm here to answer questions about up until Election Day, but -- I think it's -- yes, I'm going to stick to, sort of, the scope of it.

MR. GOWDY: Is there a privilege that you are relying upon that.

MR. TROUT: Congressman, I'm sorry. I believe before you came in, I made it clear that Ms. Hicks is here pursuant to instructions from the White House counsel's office that she is not to discuss any conversations or events that occurred after Election Day. It is, I think, from their perspective. Again, this is -- this is what I am told by White House counsel that in order to make sure that the privilege is preserved, they do not want her to answer any questions relating to conversations or events that occurred after Election Day. I suppose it is possible, although this is their issue, not ours, that perhaps there are questions that could be answered, but since they are not here and they want to protect the privilege, they have given her these instructions. And because she is a White House employee, she is going to abide by the instructions of her employer.

MR. GOWDY: You're right, I was not here. And I'm sure someone may have asked for a little more clarity on when the privilege applies and when it does not apply. If a witness, like Mr. Bannon, despite the protections surrounding any conversations or work he did at the White House had off-the-record conversations with reporters that were not authorized by the White House, that would be of interest to an institution that was considering whether or not there had been a waiver of that

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privilege, which is why I asked her the question. I'm not getting into the content. I find it interesting that a White House employee can have on- and off-the-record conversations with reporters, can even submit to an interview by a book author, but he can't answer questions from Congress. So that's why I was asking Ms. Hicks.

MR. TROUT: I understand why you were asking the question. And my only point is, is that she is not asserting privilege, she is abiding by the instructions of her employer.

MR. GOWDY: And I am trying to figure out whether or not the employer can assert privilege on conversations that he knew nothing about.

MR. TROUT: And I think that you need to take that up with White House counsel's office to see whether they would authorize her to answer particular questions. When we receive the request of the committee on January the 8th, I promptly reached out to the committee staff. I also reached out to the White House counsel to get guidance. It had been my hope that if there were particular questions that the committee wanted to ask and believed was not subject to executive privilege, that there would be a dialogue and a conversation with White House counsel and some direction that yes, this is okay, this is not okay, but apparently that did not happen.

And so, as recently as yesterday in conversations both with committee staff and with White House counsel, I don't think that there had been any movement to get clarity on those issues. And the instructions that I was given is that Ms. Hicks is not to answer questions about conversations or events that occurred after Election Day.

MR. GOWDY: Was the White House good enough to provide to you opinions by any courts of record that recognized a privilege -- the executive privilege

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in particular, before someone becomes an executive?

MR. TROUT: I did receive a copy of a correspondence, I believe, from White House counsel, I believe to the committee, on the issue of executive privilege during the course of the transition. I received a copy of that. But again, we're not the ones invoking the privilege. We are simply abiding by the instructions that we have received from her employer.

MR. GOWDY: I do appreciate that. And my real quarrel is not with your client, it's with another White House employee who has selective amnesia when it comes to executive privilege. And there are certain conversations he feels comfortable having, even though the executive knows nothing about it, and, therefore, can't invoke executive privilege. And there are interviews with book authors that he submits to, but he won't answer Congress' questions. So I was trying just to establish from this witness whether or not, while he was at the White House, did he ever have unauthorized conversations with anyone in the media.

MR. TROUT: And again, if the White House authorizes Ms. Hicks to respond to those questions, then she will.

MR. GOWDY: Ms. Hicks, when did you learn that the DNC server had been hacked?

MS. HICKS: I learned of the hacking from news reports. And I believe the first piece of information that came out was actually about Mr. Trump in -- sometime in June, sort of like an oppo file on Mr. Trump had been hacked, and then, obviously, the story line developed from there. And like I said before, it intensified surrounding the Democratic National Convention.

MR. GOWDY: So it is fair to characterize your testimony as being you had no fore- or preknowledge of the hack before it took place?

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MS. HICKS: That's correct.

MR. GOWDY: It asks for specific reference to the DNC server. Same question, but John Podesta's email. When did you learn about the unauthorized accessing of John Podesta's email?

MS. HICKS: I learned about it from media reports as it became a developing story –

MR. GOWDY: So no pre- or foreknowledge?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. GOWDY: Were you present for, aware of, participate in, otherwise have any knowledge, regardless of the source, of any efforts to coordinate the release, not the hacking, not the accessing, but the release of material that may have been accessed as a result of either of those two intrusions?

MS. HICKS: No, sir.

MR. GOWDY: Are you aware of any communications or attempted communications between anyone with the Trump campaign and WikiLeaks or its agents?

MS. HICKS: So the answer is press -- learned about certain things primarily from press reports and in preparation for some of these interviews that I have since seen an email that was forwarded to me from somebody else on the campaign saying that they had been contacted, I think, by WikiLeaks and that they had responded, and, I think, all of those communications have now been made public. I wasn't a participant in the exchange, but I received a forward of that email. So I was aware of that contact, I guess, between WikiLeaks and somebody on the campaign at the time, but that's the only occasion.

MR. GOWDY: Who was that someone on the campaign?

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MS. HICKS: Don Jr. and I believe he's released those communications publicly. He's, I think, received a direct message on Twitter or something from somebody.

MR. GOWDY: And what, if anything, did you do as a result of receiving that forwarded email?

MS. HICKS: I didn't do anything.

MR. GOWDY: Did you ever have any conversations with him about it?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall having any conversations with him directly. I might have expressed concern to somebody about putting passwords in unknown websites, just as a general practice, not specific to WikiLeaks.

MR. GOWDY: Do you know who you might have shared those concerns with?

MS. HICKS: I don't. I believe I received a forward of the email from Jared Kushner, so perhaps I had a conversation with Jared.

MR. GOWDY: Are you aware of, regardless of the source of your knowledge or information, any attempts by the Trump campaign to communicate with Julian Assange or his agents?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. GOWDY: Are you aware of any efforts regardless of the source of efforts by the Trump campaign to communicate with Guccifer or his agents?

MS. HICKS: No. I was aware, in late October of 2016, that somebody emailed Jared Kushner claiming to be Guccifer. And I believe he gave that email maybe to the Secret Service, I'm not sure why, but there was no communication. It was a received email. And it was actually -- had nothing to do with the Clinton campaign. And it was about sort of threatening to release information about Mr.

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Trump.

MR. GOWDY: Who is Bekah Mercer?

MS. HICKS: I know her to be a supporter, donor, her family is associated with Breitbart News.

MR. GOWDY: What, if anything, do you know about Cambridge Analytica?

MS. HICKS: I don't know much to be honest. Mostly what I read about, press leading up to and after the Iowa caucus.

MR. GOWDY: Do you know an Alexander Nix?

MS. HICKS: No, not that I'm aware of.

MR. GOWDY: Brad Parscale?

MS. HICKS: I know Brad, yes.

MR. GOWDY: How do you know Brad Parscale?

MS. HICKS: I know Brad -- I first knew Brad from The Trump Organization. He worked as a contractor helping with chip-produced websites for various golf properties and developments for The Trump Organization. He developed rather quickly, I think in a weekend, the initial Trump campaign website to brand the digital operation of the campaign. And just to be totally candid, I don't exactly know what that entails. I'm not, as I said before, technologically savvy. So I know that was his responsibility. I just don't know what exactly those responsibilities were.

MR. GOWDY: Are you now aware of any communication or attempted communication between Cambridge Analytica, Alexander Nix, and WikiLeaks, or Julian Assange?

MS. HICKS: I -- I can't say that I am, no.

MR. GOWDY: So if there's an email -- maybe I should ask counsel -- have you seen the email?

MR. TROUT: If I have, I've forgotten it. So I don't have any memory of seeing the email.

MR. GOWDY: Could we take 30 seconds? I'm almost done. Could we take 30 seconds and show that email?

[Discussion off the record.]

MR. GOWDY: Bear with us, Counselor. They are making copies for us.

MR. TROUT: We're here.

MR. GOWDY: You might be the only one being paid by the hour so you probably don't mind how long it takes them.

MR. TROUT: I don't think this is a document we've seen before.

MR. GOWDY: We'll give you all the time you want to take a look at it. I guess we will have this marked as what, committee exhibit 1? 2?

[Hicks Exhibit No. 2

was marked for identification.]

MR. GOWDY: Have you had a chance to review it?

MS. HICKS: Sorry?

MR. GOWDY: Have you had a chance to review it?

MS. HICKS: Yes, sir.

MR. GOWDY: Do you know who Peter Schweizer is?

MS. HICKS: I don't believe I've ever met him, but I know of him.

MR. GOWDY: Then again, I think you answered this, but my memory fails me from time to time, Alexander Nix?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall that individual.

MR. GOWDY: Had you ever seen this email before?

MS. HICKS: No.

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MR. GOWDY: Look on the first page which has a header of Peter Schweizer, about a third of the way down there a paragraph that begins with "I think."

MS. HICKS: Yes, sir.

MR. GOWDY: Do you see that? Go down to the middle line, it begins "FYI."

MS. HICKS: Uh-huh.

MR. GOWDY: "2 months ago CA," that could be California or could be Cambridge Analytica, it says "Cambridge Analytica contacted Julian Assange directly to ask for him to share Hillary's hacked emails with us to disseminate." Is that anything that you had heard of previously, seen previously?

MS. HICKS: No, sir.

MR. GOWDY: All right. This is the first time you're seeing the email and the first time that you're aware of it -- whether it happened or not. We don't know.

MS. HICKS: That's correct.

MR. GOWDY: All right. I have one more email that I think -- yeah, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] went to get one more email, so bear with us for one more second, and then Mr. King you can go now if you want I don't want to jumble.

MR. KING: It's all right.

MR. GOWDY: All right.

[Discussion off the record.]

[REDACTED] 8 minutes, sir.

MR. KING: Thank you, Trey.

I don't speak as slowly or as clearly as Mr. Gowdy. We have different accents, but you're probably more used to mine. We are obviously focused or

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magnifying people like Carter Page and George Papadopoulos. In the universe that you're operating in in 2016, during the campaign, do you ever recall not just whether or not Mr. Trump spoke with either one of them, for instance, with Carter Page, did he ever discuss him with you?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. KING: Do you ever recall him talking with anyone else on the campaign about Carter Page?

MS. HICKS: Only in the context of, you know, that was actually after the campaign, but the context was somebody's misrepresenting themselves on TV, let's send them a cease and desist. That's the only context I've ever heard him talk about Carter Page.

MR. KING: Do you ever recall anybody at the -- on the Trump campaign plane, hotels, meetings, rallies, anyone in that circle talking about Carter Page as to what his views were, they were looking forward to what he's going to report back?

MS. HICKS: No, sir.

MR. KING: There have been reports that -- obviously, he was in Moscow in June of 2016, and either had or didn't have meetings with various Russian officials over there. Do you recall him reporting back to anyone in the campaign about those meetings?

MS. HICKS: Not that I'm aware of.

MR. KING: Similarly with George Papadopoulos, apparently he had meetings in Europe in July of 2016 with Russians, with an Australian ambassador. Do you recall him reporting back to the campaign about those meetings?

MS. HICKS: Not that I'm aware of.

MR. KING: Do you recall him ever calling back saying that the Russians are

going to offer information on Hillary Clinton?

MS. HICKS: Not that I was aware of at the time. Basically reporting since --

MR. KING: No. I am talking about during the campaign.

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. KING: And do you ever recall the President asking you about meetings with George – during the campaign?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. KING: Anything about what George Papadopoulos was during as a result of his meetings?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. KING: This is really an approximation, but in your universe of zero to 100 percent, how much time was spent, you thinking about what Carter Page was doing, or George Papadopoulos was doing, or following their activities?

MS. HICKS: Less than 1 percent.

MR. KING: Trey, I yield back to you. Thank you.

[Hicks Exhibit No. 3

was marked for identification.]

MR. GOWDY: Ms. Hicks, do you have what been marked as exhibit 3 in front of you?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. GOWDY: Do you have what's been marked as committee exhibit 4 in front of you?

MS. HICKS: Yes, sir.

MR. GOWDY: Despite how they are numbered, let's see if we can take

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them in chronological order. Committee exhibit 4 purports to be originally an email from Carter Page to a J.D. Gordon. Are you looking on the second page?

MS. HICKS: Yes, sir.

MR. GOWDY: Do you have specific recall of receiving or being copied on this email?

MS. HICKS: I do not.

MR. GOWDY: I don't see where you responded, am I missing a response from you?

MS. HICKS: Not that I'm aware of.

MR. GOWDY: All right. So you didn't respond and you don't have specific recall of it?

MS. HICKS: No, sir.

MR. GOWDY: Okay. Let's flip to exhibit 3, which purports to be an email from a Mark Hosenball. He signed it, "yours faithfully." Always interesting when the media does that. Do you see that?

MS. HICKS: Yes, sir.

MR. GOWDY: All right. We'll skip over what that means for now, and we will go to the middle of the page. There is a paragraph that begins, "I have also heard." Are you with me?

MS. HICKS: Yes, sir. Yes.

MR. GOWDY: I've also heard that only a few days before the convention, like around 3 July (ph) Mr. Page spent a few days in Moscow, made a speech there. I have also heard allegations that while Barry met with Igor Sechin (ph) who he had previously praised in a speech and Segey Ivanov, are these details correct?

Please advise. Do you recall receiving that email?

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MS. HICKS: Not this specific email. Yes, I recall receiving questions about Carter Page's trip to Moscow in his speech.

MR. GOWDY: You responded, He is an informal adviser that was named as part of a much larger group several months ago. He does not speak for or represent the campaign in any official capacity.

MS. HICKS: That's right.

MR. GOWDY: And that was you that responded that?

MS. HICKS: That's right.

MR. GOWDY: That's all I have, Chairman Rooney.

MR. ROONEY: Would you like to take a break?

MR. TROUT: Sure.

MS. HICKS: I'm fine to keep going.

MR. ROONEY: Adam?

MR. SCHIFF: I have a couple of follow-up questions before I hand it back to Mr. Himes.

Did the White House instruct you not to answer any questions after your time on the campaign in your testimony with Bob Mueller?

MR. TROUT: Congressman Schiff, we're just not going to talk about communications that is she's had with White House counsel, with her lawyer, or any communications she's had with Mr. Mueller.

MR. SCHIFF: Counsel, you have talked about communications you received from the White House. You've told us they've advised you -- your client not to answer questions today.

MR. TROUT: Fair point.

MR. SCHIFF: And I am asking you, did the White House give you the same

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instructions, Ms. Hicks, not to answer questions pertaining to anything after the campaign in your other testimony about this matter?

MR. TROUT: Right. And I'm not going to respond to that question.

MR. SCHIFF: Ms. Hicks, you testified that you testified before the Senate Intelligence Committee. Did you refuse to answer questions in your October 2017 testimony before the Senate Intelligence Committee concerning conversations and events that took place after the campaign?

MR. TROUT: Yes. The scope of that interview was defined and not aware of any questions after the election.

MR. SCHIFF: Well, let me be very specific about this. Did the White House instruct you not to answer questions to the Senate Intelligence Committee about any event that took place after the campaign, or any conversation that took place after the campaign?

MR. TROUT: First of all, she did not have those conversations. I had the conversations with the White House. And I'm not going to respond to questions that don't relate to this committee.

MR. SCHIFF: My question is for you, Ms. Hicks. Were you asked questions in the Senate about the conversation between Don Jr. and the President regarding the June meeting in Trump Tower?

MS. HICKS: No, I was not.

MR. SCHIFF: Were you asked questions about any events or conversations that took place during your work on the transition, or during your work in the administration?

MS. HICKS: Not during the administration.

MR. SCHIFF: Does that mean you were asked questions about the

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transition?

MR. TROUT: Let me confer.

MR. SCHIFF: Of course.

[Discussion off the record.]

MR. TROUT: There were questions during the, relating to the transition period.

MR. SCHIFF: And did you answer those questions?

MR. TROUT: She answered those questions.

MR. SCHIFF: So the White House instructions -- I take it when you answered those questions before the Senate Intelligence Committee concerning events or conversations during the transition, you were not doing so over the objections of the White House?

MR. TROUT: That's correct.

MR. SCHIFF: So the instruction not to answer questions as to the transition is unique to this committee?

MR. TROUT: My understanding is that -- and this is my understanding of the communications that the White House counsel had with this committee is that they have, on review of opinions from the OLC, they have determined that the transition period is covered by executive privilege, and they are asserting that privilege during the transition period.

MR. SCHIFF: Well, it seems to me as it pertains to this witness -- first of all, we don't agree there is a privilege. Even if there were, it has been waived if this witness has already testified to events during the transition, but let me ask the question this way:

Is your testimony today the first testimony in which you've been instructed not

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to answer questions as to events, conversations, or actions, during the transition and during the administration?

MR. TROUT: Congressman, I'm just not going to answer that question.

MR. SCHIFF: And counsel, are you under instructions from the White House not to answer questions about the scope of their claim of not executive privilege, but a privilege not to answer questions in the hope of a privilege down the road?

MR. TROUT: Congressman, Ms. Hicks is subject to the instructions that she's subject to, and I want to make sure that they abides by them, because she is a White House employee. I am not a White House employee, but I am not going to answer that question.

MR. SCHIFF: I'm not asking you the question.

Ms. Hicks, is this the first testimony that you're giving where you're operating under instructions not to answer questions about the transition?

MR. TROUT: And I'm directing her not to answer that question.

MR. SCHIFF: And counsel, is that because you don't wish to know whether -- you don't wish this committee to know whether, in fact, whether Ms. Hicks waived any privilege that the White House might invoke?

MR. TROUT: No, because I don't want her discussing conversations that she and I have had.

MR. SCHIFF: I'm not asking about conversations that the two of you had.

MR. TROUT: The fact of the matter is, is that what she knows about this is from conversations with me.

MR. SCHIFF: Okay. I yield to Mr. Himes.

MR. HIMES: Thank you. How are we on time, [redacted]

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[REDACTED] 6 minutes.

MR. HIMES: Ms. Hicks, I want to finish the line of questioning that was about the nature of the communications operation during the campaign. So from public reporting, we hear that a number of staff provided Mr. Trump with news articles and other information for Mr. Trump to review. Is that correct? And if so, how were those articles selected?

MS. HICKS: There was no formal process that was any document or article was subject to. If you wanted to give something to the candidate and you were within proximity, there's no reason why he wouldn't receive it.

MR. HIMES: Did you act as a filter or as screen for the information going to then-candidate Trump?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. HIMES: So it was not that structured?

MS. HICKS: No, that's not my responsibility to screen the information, or determine what's for him to see and what not to see.

MR. HIMES: Do you recall either Mr. Trump or senior campaign officials ever requesting, specifically, information on the coverage around WikiLeaks, or other Russian cutouts, or any of the attempts to hack DNC, other -- other elements of the active measures? Do you remember any requests for information or news reporting on that?

MS. HICKS: I think that -- I mean, the request aside, it's very public that Mr. Trump spoke often and openly about the news reporting and news coverage of the hacks and WikiLeaks.

[REDACTED] 5 minutes.

MS. HICKS: Spoke about it in his speeches and interviews, probably

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tweeted about it.

MR. HIMES: I want to hand you an email that is dated June 15, 2016. It's from Eric Trump to senior members of the campaign, Mr. Manafort, Mr. Kushner, yourself, Ivanka Trump, Donald Trump Jr. I will send it over to you, but it's -- the subject is DNC opposition research on Trump. And it says, Team, have you seen this? This is 200 pages of opposition research from the DNC. This was just sent to us, Eric. Do you recall that email, recall seeing that email?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall this specific email, but like I said before, when I was asked about how I learned of the hack, I believe I said I first learned about it sometime in June, the first sort of piece of information that was made public was an opposition research file on Mr. Trump. So this aligns with that.

MR. HIMES: So you don't recall seeing that email specifically?

MS. HICKS: I don't.

MR. HIMES: Okay. Do you recall any sort of follow-up? And let me ask the question quite generally, was there any effort on the part of the campaign to use the information referred to in that email in any way?

MS. HICKS: Like I said, my knowledge of this -- again, I don't recall receiving an email. I obviously can't see the contents of it, but recall the first piece of information from the hack being something like 200 pages of opposition research to be used against Mr. Trump.

I don't know why the campaign would be using that opposition research ourselves, other than to inform ourselves of what might be coming, or what was already public and how we would respond to it. Certainly, there could be correspondence directing folks to go through those 200 pages, but --

MR. HIMES: Do you recall reviewing the contents of the attachments of this

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email?

MS. HICKS: Vaguely – yes, vaguely. I don't recall sitting down and reading 200 pages of research, but I recalled looking through some of it. But I believe the responsibility to comb through that information fell on the RNC, and their sort of research team at the time. We were still very bare bones at the campaign and relying very heavily on their staff at the time.

MR. HIMES: Do you recall ever reviewing any of the so-called hacked emails, so this is the emails from the DNC, many of which were made reference – that reference was made in the Rebekah Mercer, Cambridge Analytica email that you reviewed before. Do you remember any effort on the part of the campaign to – well, do you remember personally reviewing any of those so-called hacked emails?

MS. HICKS: After they were made public? Reading them on news sites and other places online? Sure.

MR. HIMES: Do you remember those emails ever been used as a -- used systematically by the campaign?

MS. HICKS: Systematically?

MR. HIMES: Well, you make it sound like you sort of read about them in the newspapers. I guess I am asking were these emails printed out, presented to members of the campaign, discussed as a possible asset for use by the campaign?

MS. HICKS: Yes. I think that there was a recognition on behalf of members of the campaign that this was an opportunity to highlight the hypocrisy of some of our opponents. We had nothing to do with that information being made public, but once it was available, using it in some way to our benefit was something that I think everyone at the campaign participated in, whether it was RNC or on the

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campaign, I think it was how do we benefit from this in a messaging context.

MR. HIMES: So let me give you the opportunity to be more specific, you said you think everybody from the campaign was involved. Let me ask you to be more specific. Were there individuals within the campaign who were specifically charged with going through that material and thinking about how it might be used?

[REDACTED] 1 minute.

MS. HICKS: Again, I don't recall who was directed to go through what information, both at the time of this email on June 15th, and up until and after the convention, we relied heavily on the staff of the RNC. But yeah, I think there was an expectation that somebody would review this material and find the best way to use it to our advantage.

MR. HIMES: Okay. I'm hoping for a little more specificity than everybody at the campaign. If that's true, that's true, but --

MS. HICKS: I guess my statement about everybody, I think the expectation from everybody was that we would use this information to our advantage. I don't know specifically who was involved in combing through the information.

MR. HIMES: So you don't know specific individuals that reviewed any of the information that we're discussing?

MS. HICKS: I don't. I'm sure that if I looked through documents, I could go back. I just don't recall off the top of my head, who would have been responsible for that at this time in the campaign.

MR. HIMES: Okay. So you weren't in your role as sort of the senior communications person. You weren't formally charged with an internal review of this information to think about how it might be used?

MS. HICKS: Not that I recall in that broad of a context. I certainly recall,

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you know, getting messages in, sort of, like a one-off capacity of, you know, have you seen this? How are you messaging this? How are you pushing this out? Should we tweet about this? I certainly recall receiving things like that or having those discussions. But, sort of, overseeing all of this? No. That was not my responsibility.

MR. HIMES: Last question very quickly. In July 2016, candidate Trump during a news conference called on Russia to hack Hillary Clinton. And I quote, "Russia, if you're listening, I hope you're able to find the 30,000 emails that are missing." At any point, were you involved in discussions surrounding how to talk about the dumping of these emails, the seeking of these emails? Did you advise Mr. Trump on anything related to this statement?

MS. HICKS: I did advise him after the statement was made that unfortunately, there were some that took it literally, and not in the way in which it was intended, which was sort of to mock the very idea that he or anyone on the campaign could possibly be associated with the hacking of these emails, as some on the Clinton campaign and in the media had started to suggest.

So yes, I did make him aware that there were some that were taking this sort of facetious comment to be literal and that we needed to make sure people understood that it was intended to mock those that were suggesting he could possibly be involved with the hack.

MR. HIMES: So it's your testimony that Mr. Trump actually didn't hope that Russia would find those 30,000 so-called lost emails.

MS. HICKS: I -- I can't speak to, you know, what Mr. Trump was hoping for. I can only speak to our conversations after he made the comment in which he expressed sort of disbelief that anybody could possibly take that seriously as a

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directive to Russia to hack Hillary Clinton's emails.

[REDACTED] Time.

MR. HIMES: Thank you.

MR. KING: Thank you. I just have a few brief questions.

Are you aware of anybody in the campaign ever getting any advanced copies of any of the hacked documents?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. KING: Any advanced notices from Assange or WikiLeaks of what would be in those documents?

MS. HICKS: No, sir.

MR. KING: Also, as far as the campaign staff, or the RNC, or the Trump staff, analyzing these documents, wouldn't that be standard procedure to be analyzing any documents made public in a campaign?

MS. HICKS: I -- this is my first campaign, but I would think so.

MR. KING: Would the -- I guess, after the Intelligence Community shared that these documents had been hacked by Russia, did that change the attitude?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. KING: Why, because they were in the public domain?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. KING: Do you recall anybody on the campaign ever talking about contact that they had with Julian Assange?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. KING: Let me take to a question that has not been asked before, did Roger Stone have a role during -- after the nomination?

MS. HICKS: Not that I'm aware of, no.

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MR. KING: So he didn't tell you about any conversations he had with Assange or WikiLeaks?

MS. HICKS: I don't believe I'd spoken to Mr. Stone since he left the campaign in the summer of 2015.

MR. KING: So the day after it started, right?

MS. HICKS: Actually, I think we had one conversation in the spring 2016 about a media opportunity, and we exchanged a handful of emails, mostly that I was sending on behalf of Mr. Trump. Like I said, he doesn't email so sometimes he would dictate notes for me to send to people, but I don't believe I've spoken to Mr. Stone.

MR. KING: Then just really yes or no to make it clear, are you aware of any contact between the campaign, yourself, Mr. Trump, and Roger Stone involving Julian Assange and WikiLeaks?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. ROONEY: Would you like a break?

MR. TROUT: Yeah.

MR. ROONEY: Take a 5-minute break.

[Recess.]

[12:11 p.m.]

██████████ Mr. Schiff, over to you all.

MR. HIMES: Right. Sorry. I was going to hand it over to Carson, but let's — sorry. Give us just a moment.

MR. SCHIFF: You mentioned, Ms. Hicks, in your testimony earlier that the President — you had a discussion with the President, then-candidate Trump, after he made the comments about, "Hey, Russians, if you're listening, hack Hillary

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Clinton's emails," to let him know that people were perceiving it not as a jest but in seriousness.

Did he indicate to you before he made the remarks that he was going to make those remarks?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SCHIFF: And did he have any comment to you about them before you advised him that people were not taking this as in jest?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall the -- I don't recall the sequence of our exchange.

MR. SCHIFF: And do you recall what he said about the comments afterwards when you raised this concern with him?

MS. HICKS: Look, I think he had some indication based on the followup questions from the reporters in the press conference. I believe one of them specifically asked, like, you're not actually suggesting that a foreign adversary hack your political opponent, I believe, was one of the questions.

So he had an indication that that's where people were going with the narrative. And our conversation was more about how we wanted to respond to that suggestion.

And this took place in transit from Miami, I think, to another location in Florida. And then later that afternoon we were in Pennsylvania at a rally where he spoke again about the same topic, I think.

MR. SCHIFF: At the time he made these comments, in late July of 2016, he was aware that the DNC had, in fact, been hacked, right?

MS. HICKS: That's correct. I believe this was -- these comments were made July 27, which would have been a Wednesday, and I think that the Clinton campaign had started to make, you know, accusations about the Trump campaign

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being involved and Russia being involved and the two working together just a few days prior on the Sunday morning programs as part of, you know, the convention.

MR. SCHIFF: And at that time, did candidate Trump recognize that the Russians were involved in the hacking of the DNC?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall any suggestion otherwise, publicly or privately.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you recall, though, having discussions with him in which he acknowledged that, okay, the Russians had hacked the DNC, and maybe the Russians would have access to these missing Hillary emails, even if he wasn't seriously calling on them to produce them?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall having specific conversations with him about that, but generally that he was aware that that was something that was being suggested primarily at this time by the Clinton campaign.

I believe I recall a headline from the Associated Press saying something like, you know, Clinton campaign alleges Trump campaign and Russia behind the hack, FBI still investigating, something to that effect, that alluded to the fact that law enforcement had not made a definitive determination at the time that these comments were made.

I don't recall having conversations with candidate Trump in this timeframe about specifically who was responsible, just that it was a ridiculous assertion that we were involved in any way whatsoever.

MR. SCHIFF: Well, during the course of the campaign, did the candidate accept the conclusion of the Intelligence Community that it would express in October that the Russians were behind the hack?

MS. HICKS: I didn't have any conversations with the candidate about that that don't reflect what he said publicly, which, you know, he has -- he did on several

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occasions, I think most notably in the Presidential debate, which, I think, was October 19, where he said that it could have been Russia, it could have been China, it could have been a 400-pound person sitting in their bedroom. Don't quote me on that, but the general framework of the answer was along those lines. And he expressed as much privately as he did publicly.

MR. SCHIFF: What does that mean though? Does that mean that privately he doubted whether the Russians were really behind this, that he generally thought it could be some 400-pound fat guy? Or did privately he acknowledge that, okay, the Russians did this? Whether he had acknowledged any campaign role or not, did he acknowledge that the Russians were behind the hack?

MS. HICKS: I think that the focus of -- I think it was -- the conversations internally surrounded much more around the content of the hacked information than who was behind it, and for the media and others, obviously, to deflect from the content, and it surrounded much more around who was responsible for this.

So I just don't recall a lot of specific conversations. I think certainly there were, you know, at least one or two occasions where it was recommended from a messaging standpoint that he sort of embrace that component of it. But, you know, there are lots of recommendations made from a messaging standpoint that aren't embraced, so I didn't find anything unusual about it.

MR. SCHIFF: I want to try to deconstruct that a bit. Does this mean that you recommended to candidate Trump that he accept the conclusion that the Russians had hacked and he resisted that or wouldn't accept that advice?

MS. HICKS: No, that's not what that means. I don't specifically recall myself speaking directly to him about that suggestion. I guess the context of the one specific conversation I can remember was in debate prep about whether or

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not -- that he would be asked whether or not they had hacked and what his response would be. And the response that he gave during the prep session was the exact same response that he gave during the debate.

MR. SCHIFF: Well, and --

MS. HICKS: And I guess what I'm saying is that the folks that were involved in debate prep -- I was there. I don't recall specifically being a person that made a suggestion of embracing that piece of it, but others I do recall did, and he felt that this was his best answer..

MR. SCHIFF: Well, it's one thing to do debate prep and say, "This, I think, is my best answer to give during the debate," and it's another to say what was the candidate's view of Russian involvement in the hacking.

You spent probably more time with him than just about anyone else other than family during the campaign. Surely, you were present for conversations with candidate Trump in which he expressed his view about whether Russia was responsible for the hack. Were there such conversations? And what's the best of your recollection as to what he said in terms of whether he accepted Russia's involvement in this?

MS. HICKS: To the best of my recollection, his private comments echo his public comments, which was that at the time I believe what he was saying was that it was probably Russia but it could have been others too. And I think that's a truthful statement.

I don't know the timing of the conclusion of the Intelligence Community's findings. Obviously, in January, you know, a number of agencies concluded and produced a report and that was shared with certain folks, and obviously there's been a lot of public reporting about it. So, you know, that's after the time of the

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campaign. But during the campaign, his comments privately echoed what he said publicly.

MR. SCHIFF: The statement he made in late July about, "Hey, Russians, if you're listening, hack Hillary Clinton's emails," that was made well after we know from the George Papadopoulos plea that Russians had approached George Papadopoulos with information that they had possession of Hillary Clinton emails. Do you know who on the campaign George Papadopoulos communicated that information to?

██████████ Five minutes.

MS. HICKS: I don't know.

MR. SCHIFF: Did anyone in the campaign tell you that they had heard from either Papadopoulos or anyone else in the campaign that the Russians had informed campaign personnel that they were in possession of some of these emails?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SCHIFF: So at no time during the campaign, and I know you won't answer the question after the campaign, but at no time during the campaign was it brought to your attention, either because you were present during a conversation or someone had a conversation with you or you read this in an email or a communication, that, in fact, the Russians had communicated with elements of the campaign that they were in possession of stolen Clinton or DNC emails?

MS. HICKS: No, I'm not aware of any of those conversations or activities.

MR. SCHIFF: This comment the President made also took place after the -- about a month after the meeting at Trump Tower, not with some lower-level campaign person but with the President's son, son-in-law, and campaign manager,

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about obtaining dirt on Hillary Clinton.

Were you made aware during the campaign at any time that the Russians, either directly or through intermediaries, had offered dirt to the campaign on Hillary Clinton?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SCHIFF: Did you ever have any conversation with Donald Trump Jr. about obtaining information on Hillary Clinton, either from WikiLeaks or from Russians or Russian intermediaries?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SCHIFF: Did you ever have a conversation with Jared Kushner about whether he had been in touch with WikiLeaks or Guccifer 2 or the Russians or Russian intermediaries regarding information on Hillary Clinton or the DNC?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SCHIFF: And the same question with Paul Manafort. Did you ever have any conversation with Paul Manafort? Did it ever come to your attention that Paul Manafort had been offered any information about Hillary Clinton, any dirt on Hillary Clinton, any stolen emails? Did that ever come to your attention during the campaign?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SCHIFF: I'll yield back to Mr. Himes.

MR. HIMES: I yield to Mr. Carson.

MR. CARSON: How much time do we have?

██████████ Two minutes.

MR. CARSON: Ms. Hicks, on March 31, 2016, the campaign held a meeting of the Foreign Policy Advisory Committee. When was this committee

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established, ma'am?

MS. HICKS: I believe that it was announced 10 days prior, on March 21, 2016.

MR. CARSON: Who exactly established it?

MS. HICKS: So if you want, I'll just sort of tell you a little bit about what I know of the committee and how it came to be.

You know, at this time the field had been whittled down a little bit and people were focusing a little bit less on personality and a little bit more on policy. And I think people were increasingly curious about the campaign and who was advising Mr. Trump, especially when we talked about policy. And there was a lot of pressure from folks in the media and certainly our -- the few opponents that were left, about who was advising the candidate.

So a couple of folks on the campaign, I think, thought it would be a good idea to put together some sort of committee, you know, of advisers specific to foreign policy. And we -- Senator Sessions was involved at this time. He would head up the committee.

And Sam Clovis, who was part of the policy team, he was tasked with finding -- you know, putting together the members of the committee. I have no idea how those folks came to be the ones that were put on the committee. I have no idea what kind of vetting they underwent.

My guess is they said "I'm pro-Donald Trump" and had something on their resume that alluded in some way to foreign policy experience. Relevant or not, it was something. And that's my understanding of how the committee came to be.

I believe they met on that one occasion on March 31, and I'm not aware of any other time they convened as a group or communicated with Mr. Trump.

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Certainly, there were some individual members that stayed with the campaign in other capacities, like General Keith Kellogg. But as it pertained to the Carter Page, George Papadopoulos, I'm not aware of any other involvement outside of that meeting.

MR. CARSON: Were you in attendance, ma'am?

MS. HICKS: I was -- the meeting was at the -- Mr. Trump's hotel, which was under construction at the time. We had several other meetings that day, including an interview with The Washington Post, and then a meeting afterwards, not at the hotel but at the RNC, before we went back to New York.

So I was at the hotel that day, and I sat in on pieces of the different meetings that were had very briefly or, you know, shook hands as people came and went.

In terms of this specific meeting, I don't recall being present after the greeting, because Mr. Trump had an interview immediately following, and I was meeting with the reporters prior to.

MR. ROONEY: Andre, we're going to come right back to you.

Peter.

MR. KING: Thank you.

Just a few quick questions. Would it have been your responsibility at all during the campaign to be determining whether or not the conclusion of the Intelligence Community was accurate?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. KING: So you were never asked to analyze it or look at the backup for it?

MS. HICKS: No, sir.

MR. KING: Okay. When all the talk was out about Russia being involved

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or possibly being involved, do you recall either Mr. Trump or anybody in the campaign staff say, "If the Russians do have something, can we get it? Is there any way we can find out this information to see if the Russians do have it?"

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. KING: So you're not aware of any attempt to reach out to Russia or Russians or Russian entities?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. KING: Again, if we could switch topics. How did Paul Manafort become involved in the campaign? And I'm asking these questions mainly so we have it on the record. Since we mentioned Carter Page, we mentioned Papadopoulos, I'd like to know about Manafort.

MS. HICKS: Sure. My understanding is that he was recommended as a convention manager by Tom Barrack, who is a long-time friend of the President's. And I guess Tom has had a relationship with Mr. Manafort for quite some time.

My understanding, he was initially recommended at some point in February of 2016, but I believe the first conversation or meeting that candidate Trump had with Mr. Manafort was on March 24, 2016. We had dinner in Palm Beach at Mar-a-Lago, and I was present for that dinner.

MR. KING: Did Mr. Trump ask you afterwards what your impression was? Was it a good idea to bring on Manafort?

MS. HICKS: I think it had already been decided that he was going to come on in a volunteer capacity as the convention manager. I think the initial impression of him after the dinner by Mr. Trump was just that he seemed like a professional guy, whereas he referred to myself and Corey Lewandowski as "the kids."

So I think he was -- it was refreshing for him to sort of have somebody that

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was a little bit more his age and that had had experience specifically in Washington and with conventions. And we were sort of approaching a new phase of the campaign where we needed to think about things like delegates and other things. So I think he was optimistic about Paul's experience and how that could be helpful.

MR. KING: What was your impression of Manafort?

MS. HICKS: He -- my opinion of him is probably not relevant to questions here today.

MR. KING: I assume I know what it is, but in any event.

Do you know if any examination was gone into as to his background, his lobbying activities, his business activities?

MS. HICKS: I can't say for sure, but if it was like the vetting done by anybody else involved, I don't think it was --

MR. KING: So that didn't come up in Mar-a-Lago?

MS. HICKS: No. I think there was a mention of his work for -- his work with -- forgive me if I'm getting this wrong -- Charlie Black and Roger Stone, and that that was sort of the last time that Mr. Trump had heard his name, like where have you been all this time? I recall a specific exchange about that.

But, no, I don't recall any conversations about his lobbying work at the dinner.

MR. KING: Did Roger Stone contact you at all about Manafort?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. KING: Okay. When did you first learn about his activities in Ukraine?

MS. HICKS: I can't say for sure, but, you know, in the weeks after it was made public that he was part of the campaign, probably sometime in April or May people started doing some reporting on his past.

But, you know, it's very interesting to think back to those reports, and I'm not

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referencing anything specific. I just recall at the time Mr. Trump was very pleased with the press coverage that Paul generated, both surrounding the campaign, that the operation had sort of been professionalized, and also Paul's personal press, that he was this very impressive sort of establishment type that we hadn't previously had around the campaign.

And the reporting -- that was an accurate reflection of the reporting which was, you know, by all accounts, quite favorable of Mr. Manafort.

MR. KING: When did you first start learning about possible improper payments to Mr. Manafort involving Ukraine?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall. I do recall getting press inquiries about Mr. Manafort's professional history, and I forwarded those questions on to Paul. And I don't recall him responding often, but sometimes I would go by his office and just say, you know, did you get my email?

And he would just kind of -- he wouldn't even turn around from his desk. He would just say, yeah, just ignore it, or he would write me back something like, "All BS, ignore," something like that.

MR. KING: Now, was Bannon on board or not when the major stories broke, I guess, in The New York Times about the hidden funds?

MS. HICKS: Yeah. So that was in -- I guess, the timeline there is a little gray, but my understanding was that Steve had been brought on on Sunday the 14th in the afternoon officially and the story about Manafort broke that evening and was sort of the front page on Monday the 15th.

MR. KING: Okay. So Bannon was on board, I guess, right around the time that the story broke?

MS. HICKS: Yeah. I think that Mr. Trump had made a decision to make a

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change in leadership on the campaign outside of Paul's issues that were being publicly reported. I think that he -- that certainly contributed to expediting and intensifying the way in which his role changed, and then ultimately he was fired at the end of that week.

But Mr. Trump was going to make a change anyways. I think Paul's -- Mr. Manafort's role as the convention manager, it was never intended to evolve into campaign manager. And he was -- he did not have the chemistry with the candidate or an understanding of him to fulfill that role in any meaningful way.

So there was -- it was very clear that there would be a change in leadership at some point before the end of the election.

MR. KING: Okay. I'm not here testifying, but obviously they had a meeting in Trump Tower that week. And it was right after Bannon came in, and Paul was there briefly. Did he realize he was on the way out?

MS. HICKS: I don't think so. I think he knew that things were changing. I think he understood that he wasn't the best person to be handling Mr. Trump's schedules and helping to put together the rallies and other campaign events.

But I think that he thought that he would maintain a leadership role as the chairman of the campaign and continue to be sort of a liaison from the campaign to the folks at the RNC and, you know, continue to work that aspect of it. I think it came as quite a surprise to him when he was told that he wouldn't be involved at all a few days later.

MR. KING: How did he -- did candidate Trump at that time, nominee Trump, when the story broke on the night of the 14th and the morning of the 15th, did he tell you Manafort had to go? And when did he tell you that Manafort had to go?

MS. HICKS: He told me that Paul had to go Thursday morning, the 18th.

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He was leaving, I think, for North Carolina for the day and had asked me to stay back. It was one of the only trips I didn't go on.

It was Kellyanne and Steve's second day on the job, and he wanted me to stay back and sort of get them acquainted with everybody and everything. And he had quite a few members of the family traveling with him that day, so -- but the last thing he said to me as he was getting in the car to leave was, you know, get rid of Paul, basically.

MR. KING: Did he say why?

MS. HICKS: I think he wasn't -- I think he wasn't worth the trouble to begin with. And it's never good when people are getting front page New York Times stories, whether they're positive or negative. But certainly if you're not making a valuable contribution or producing results and you have those stories, I don't think it's acceptable.

MR. KING: How did Mr. Trump react to the allegations himself? Was he offended by it? Did he say, you know, who does this guy think he is, you know, as far as the money that he was supposedly getting?

MS. HICKS: Yeah. I don't recall sort of -- I recall maybe a joke about, I guess, we know now why he has an apartment in Trump Tower. But I don't recall any other commentary about the article itself, just that he was frustrated by the coverage and that it didn't seem to be the end. It sort of looked like the beginning of this kind of reporting on Paul and that we probably shouldn't be associated with anybody like that.

MR. KING: My time is running out. Who told Manafort he was gone?

MS. HICKS: I think Steve Bannon had a conversation with him the evening of the 18th. Paul had been in D.C. that day. Steve had called him to let him know

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that he was going to be -- no longer be with the campaign. And Paul said, you know, I'd like to have a conversation face to face, man to man, is my understanding. They spoke that night. I'm not --

MR. KING: Who's they?

MS. HICKS: Steve Bannon and Paul. I'm not sure what the result of that conversation was, but I do recall the following morning, Friday the 19th, we left very early for Louisiana, we were going down there to do some work concerning the floods that had happened, and being in the car with candidate Trump when Jared Kushner called to check in.

And the President said -- or Mr. Trump said, you know, has Paul been fired yet? And Jared said, no, I'm taking him out to breakfast first. And I remember the response of, "We don't need to buy him eggs. Let him go."

So I think he was done. And he said, you know, by the time I land in Louisiana I want this to be over with, so just do it.

MR. KING: Okay. Thank you. I might say, I think you did reveal some of your feelings toward Manafort.

MR. ROONEY: Mr. Carson.

MR. CARSON: Thank you.

Ms. Hicks, on April 27, 2016, President Trump delivered his first foreign policy speech at the Mayflower Hotel. Were you in attendance?

MS. HICKS: Yes, sir.

MR. CARSON: What role did you have in planning the event?

MS. HICKS: A very small role. I was told about the event after it had already been planned essentially. I remember Mr. Kushner connecting me with the person at the National Interest, I think it's called, that was sort of coordinating

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everything, that it was going to be their event, and that they were inviting members of the, you know, quote, foreign policy community and the press as well, which is sort of where I got connected to ensure that the folks that had been covering the campaign, sort of the, you know, the Trump campaign beat reporters were going to be able to attend, and that we had a very strong presence there from the media.

And then there was a conversation, I recall, I don't know if this took place over email or internally, and then somebody communicated it to the folks at the National Interest, that just said that the Press Club was not a large enough venue to accommodate the amount of press that we were going to have in attendance.

But that was my only involvement in the event.

MR. CARSON: What was the format of the event?

MS. HICKS: It was like any other event. There was a sort of pre-greeting prior to which typically happened at rallies and other events as well, where you take a few clicks with people or shake a few hands of folks and then go out and give the speech.

My recollection of this particular day, we were late coming from New York. We were leaving from the speech to go to Indiana, and we came in a back door to some sort of reception that had been planned, I guess. He took a few photos and then immediately went out to give the speech.

MR. CARSON: On June 9, 2016, weeks after the President secured an early meeting in 2016 before his nomination for President, Donald Trump Jr. arranged a meeting at Trump Hotel with a Russian lawyer with connections to the Kremlin.

The campaign manager, then Mr. Manafort, as we previously discussed, and the President's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, also attended the meeting, which we

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know took place on the 9th of June. Other folks were there, like Rinat Akhmetshin and Anatoli Samochornov.

Aside from Mr. Trump Jr. and Mr. Manafort and Mr. Kushner, have you met any of the attendees of that meeting? Do you recall?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. CARSON: Were you at Trump Tower on June 9, 2016?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. CARSON: Okay. Have you provided, ma'am, the committee -- have you provided the committee with your schedule from June 2016?

MS. HICKS: I didn't keep a schedule.

MR. CARSON: Were you with the candidate that day?

MS. HICKS: I assume so. I don't recall any specific interactions or anything of note.

MR. CARSON: On this same day, around 4:40 p.m., then-candidate Trump tweeted, quote, "How long did it take your staff of 823 people to think that up, and where are your 33,000 emails that you deleted?" end quote.

Did candidate Trump discuss with you Hillary Clinton's emails?

MS. HICKS: Generally or on that day?

MR. CARSON: Both.

MS. HICKS: Generally, yes. I think that was a pretty common talking point on the campaign. I don't recall any specific conversations that day.

And in terms of the tweets, I don't know what the context is. Obviously, it sounds like a response to something that she or somebody on her campaign had said. I don't -- I don't know what it is, though.

MR. CARSON: And lastly, on July the 8th, 2017, The New York Times

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broke the story about the June 9 meeting involving Mr. Trump and Ms. Veselnitskaya and others.

Ma'am, when did you become aware of the fact that the meeting would become public?

MR. TROUT: I think this is going to get into conversations and events that occurred after the campaign. And so I think, in keeping with the instructions from the White House, she's not going to answer that.

MR. CARSON: Thank you, ma'am.

Eric.

MR. SWALWELL: Thank you, Ms. Hicks.

Ms. Hicks, who is Mark Carallo (ph)?

MS. HICKS: I don't really know, to be honest.

MR. SWALWELL: Someone you've ever met?

MS. HICKS: Yes, I've met him before. I'm not really familiar with who he is, his background, or how he came to be involved with the President.

MR. SWALWELL: When did you first meet him?

MS. HICKS: Probably in late May or early June --

MR. SWALWELL: Which year?

MS. HICKS: -- of 2017.

MR. SWALWELL: How would you judge his credibility?

MS. HICKS: Like I said, I don't know him, so --

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. You can't say one way or the other?

MS. HICKS: I don't know him.

MR. SWALWELL: Before you joined the campaign, were you asked to sign a nondisclosure agreement for your work with Ms. Trump, Ivanka Trump?

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[Discussion off the record.]

MS. HICKS: I didn't have a specific agreement with Ms. Trump, but it's my understanding that all employees of The Trump Organization sign some form of a nondisclosure agreement, primarily a document -- it's an agreement that you won't write a book.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you sign one?

MS. HICKS: I did, yes.

MR. SWALWELL: When did you sign yours?

MS. HICKS: When I -- September of 2014, sometime after I accepted the job and was filling out forms.

MR. SWALWELL: Once you joined the campaign, did you sign a nondisclosure agreement for the campaign?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. And when was that?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall. Sometime in spring or summer of 2015.

MR. SWALWELL: Anything about your being party to those agreements limit your testimony with us today?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Do you understand the question? Like, do you believe that because you've signed that agreement it prevents you from telling us anything that is within the scope of what we're asking today?

MS. HICKS: I don't know the answer to that question legally, but it has not impacted any of my answers thus far, and I don't anticipate --

MR. SWALWELL: Would you tell us if you felt you may violate the agreement if you had to tell us?

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MS. HICKS: Well, I've already violated the agreement in spirit by sharing the things I've shared, and I will continue to share as you ask. So --

MR. SWALWELL: Were you aware of any payments during the campaign to any individuals to limit or prevent them from commenting on knowledge of anything related to Russia?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Were you aware of any payments that the campaign made to any person to limit anything that they would say publicly about anything?

MS. HICKS: Can you repeat the question?

MR. SWALWELL: Were you aware of the campaign, the Trump campaign or The Trump Organization, making payments to any individuals to limit or prevent them from speaking about their knowledge of individuals within The Trump Organization or on the campaign?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Was candidate Trump at Trump Tower on June 9?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: All day?

MS. HICKS: I don't have his schedule in front of me, but I don't recall any movements of note. It's possible. The reason we were in New York was for, like, a fundraiser or something else, but I don't recall attending any events, so --

MR. SWALWELL: And where were you that day?

MS. HICKS: I was in New York.

MR. SWALWELL: Where in New York?

MS. HICKS: I was working out of Trump Tower.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. Which floor?

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MS. HICKS: My office was located on the 5th floor at this time, so primarily there, but spent a lot of time on the 26th floor in the candidate's office.

MR. SWALWELL: And below the 26th floor is the 25th floor. And was that a floor that would ever be used by members of the Trump family?

MS. HICKS: By members of the Trump family?

MR. SWALWELL: Yes.

MS. HICKS: Yes. That's where all three of the children work. It's where I worked when I worked for The Trump Organization. There's a large conference room that was used quite often.

MR. SWALWELL: So just as you had an office on the 5th floor and would sometimes spend your time on the 26th floor, would you also see the children who had an office on the 25th floor spend time on the 26th floor?

MS. HICKS: Would the children go up to the 26th floor of Trump Tower?

MR. SWALWELL: Yes.

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: And was that something that happened routinely?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Would you -- how did you characterize the relationship between Donald Trump Jr. and his father? Were they close?

MS. HICKS: I think that they're, by all accounts, a close family. They obviously spend a lot of time together.

MR. SWALWELL: I guess, during -- in June 2016, for instance, did you ever see Donald Trump Jr. speak with his father about Donald Trump Jr.'s participation in the campaign?

MS. HICKS: I did not, no.

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MR. SWALWELL: You never observed the two of them talk about the campaign?

MS. HICKS: About the campaign, yes, I -- yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. So you did see Donald Trump Jr. talk to his father?

MS. HICKS: Yes. Sorry, I thought you said participation in the meeting. Yes, in the campaign, yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. So is it fair to say that it was common for father and son to talk about son's role in the campaign?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Would you see Donald Trump Jr. give updates to his father about things he had done or actions he had taken on behalf of the campaign?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Was Donald Trump Jr. able to make decisions about the campaign without seeking or receiving permission from his father?

MS. HICKS: Um, yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. Can you give me an example of something you saw or something he did that would suggest that was the case?

MS. HICKS: Sure. I think that most of the things he was doing pertaining to the fundraising operations of the campaign, I think that that were -- those were all actions he was taking without the explicit permission of candidate Trump.

He was encouraged to help, things like participating in a, you know, hunt in Iowa. I don't believe he sought his father's permission. I think it was something he notified him of, you know, after the decision had been made. Things like that.

MR. SWALWELL: And just as you said that you had seen Donald Trump Jr.

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in person update his father about Donald Trump Jr.'s role in the campaign, did you ever see Donald Trump the candidate speak on the phone to his son about his role in the campaign? Meaning, would they communicate by phone about what Don Jr. was doing?

MS. HICKS: I don't know that I ever witnessed him, you know, receiving or asking for updates about specific campaign activities. More often it was, you know, sort of like a pat on the back for a media appearance, like, "I saw you on TV, great job," or, "I just ran into this person, they said you were -- you know, you gave a great speech." Things like that.

MR. SWALWELL: You've been described as someone who, if you can't get ahold of candidate Trump, better call Hope, chances are she's near him, and you could pass the phone to the candidate. Is that accurate? Did that happen a lot?

MS. HICKS: A lot, I don't know. Yes, it's happened.

MR. SWALWELL: And were you ever contacted by Donald Trump Jr. during the campaign so that he could speak with his father?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. How often would that happen?

MS. HICKS: Not often.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. The individuals that Mr. Carson spoke to you about with respect to the June 9 meeting, Rob Goldstone, is that somebody who you ever heard Mr. Trump mention in your presence?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Were you aware of what the relationship was between Mr. Goldstone and Mr. Trump?

MS. HICKS: No.

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MR. SWALWELL: Who is Aras Agalarov?

MS. HICKS: I know, you know, very little from what I've read in media reports, which, you know, I can't recall a ton of specifics.

MR. SWALWELL: I'll just limit it to your knowledge. Is he an individual that Mr. Trump ever spoke to you about?

MS. HICKS: No.

██████████ One minute.

MR. SWALWELL: In your presence, did you ever hear Mr. Trump talk about Mr. Agalarov?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SWALWELL: How about Emin Agalarov?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Where is Rhona's office?

MS. HICKS: On the 26th floor of Trump Tower.

MR. SWALWELL: Where does Rhona keep the call books that document who calls Mr. Trump and messages that are passed to Mr. Trump?

MS. HICKS: That would be a question for Rhona. I wasn't aware that she kept a call log.

MR. SWALWELL: Have you ever seen Rhona pass messages to Mr. Trump of calls that had come in for the day?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. How often would you see that?

MS. HICKS: Rarely. It was more a practice on the campaign of passing messages while we were on the road. When he's in the office, it's just called out, you know, this person is on the phone, do you want to speak to them?

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MR. SWALWELL: I'll pass back to Mr. King.

MR. KING: Thank you.

Ms. Hicks, is it your testimony then that you're not aware of either Donald Trump, Jared Kushner, or Manafort speaking to the President about the meeting of June 9?

MS. HICKS: I'm not aware of them having a conversation at the time.

MR. KING: So Donald Trump Sr. never spoke to you about this meeting --

MS. HICKS: That's correct.

MR. KING: -- during the campaign?

Okay. Since Don Jr. did speak to his father, the fact that if he did not give this information to his father, could it mean that Don Jr. thought it was insignificant and an unimportant meeting?

MS. HICKS: Sure, I think that's very possible.

MR. KING: We're talking a lot of hypotheticals, so I figure --

MS. HICKS: I think that's very possible.

MR. KING: Okay. So I'll give you a hypothetical too.

One issue that has been raised is that the night -- I guess it was the final primary of the campaign, the New Jersey primary, and candidate Trump spoke in his acceptance speech or his victory speech, and in there he made this remark that -- and this was on June 7, I guess. I don't know what it is, June 7. He said, "I'm going to give a major speech on probably Monday of next week. I'm going to be discussing all of the things that have taken place with the Clintons. I think you're going to find it very informative and very, very interesting."

Do you know what he was referring to?

MS. HICKS: Yes. He was going to give a speech essentially that was an

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outline of the book "Clinton Cash." That was the concept of the speech. And he did not give that speech the following week because of the Pulse Nightclub shooting that happened, you know, early Sunday morning.

So on Sunday ■ different speech was written about addressing terrorism and homeland security, which he gave Monday, I think, at St. Anselm's College in New Hampshire. And the following week he gave his speech about Hillary Clinton at the Trump SoHo Hotel in New York City on, I think, June 22, 2016.

MR. KING: Okay. Now, if people are trying to find dots to connect, when he gave the speech on June 7, was he giving that in anticipation of the Russians giving information on June 9?

MS. HICKS: No. Like I said, I think he was referencing the speech he was supposed to give outlining the book or the information in the book "Clinton Cash."

MR. KING: So, again, this is being repetitive, but as of June 7, he was not aware of ■ meeting coming up on June 9 with anyone from Russia?

MS. HICKS: That's my understanding, yes, sir.

MR. KING: Right. Okay.

Adam.

MR. SCHIFF: Just a couple followup questions before I hand it back to Mr. Swalwell.

You mentioned Don Jr. telling his father about a trip to go hunting in -- I can't remember what State it was.

MS. HICKS: Iowa.

MR. SCHIFF: Iowa. And I think you used that as an illustration of sometimes he would seek permission from his father for campaign things, other times he would merely inform him after the fact.

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MS. HICKS: Uh-huh.

MR. SCHIFF: Was that in the category of informing him after the fact, or was that something he previewed with the President before he went?

MS. HICKS: No. I was providing that as an example of something that he would have done without seeking his permission.

I recall one specific occasion where he did that. There may be other occasions where he, you know, told the candidate prior to. But I recall one specific occasion that he did not give advance notice and told him after the fact. That was the example I referenced.

MR. SCHIFF: But significant things he would tell his father about before undertaking them to make sure that his father was copacetic with it?

MS. HICKS: I don't think that there was any -- look, I think that it's like any father-son relationship, especially in a family like the Trump family. You do things that you know are going to be successful, and the goal is always to produce results. There's not a lot of talk about what you might do. You talk about the results that you produce after the fact.

So while I think that it would have been perfectly normal for Donald Trump Jr. to provide updates to his dad about things that he was doing or planning for on the campaign, I think the majority of things that were being communicated to Mr. Trump in the context of the campaign or professionally were things that could be talked about as a result, a proven success.

So I don't know if that answers your question, but hopefully it provides a little bit more context.

MR. SCHIFF: I'm not sure. Let me ask it this way.

Donald Trump was the boss in the campaign, was he not?

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MS. HICKS: He was.

MR. SCHIFF: And Don Jr. wouldn't make decisions for the campaign that might have ■ big impact on the campaign, either favorably or unfavorably, without seeing his father's approval, would he?

MS. HICKS: I don't want to speculate. That's not for me to say.

MR. SCHIFF: I don't want you to speculate either, but you spent more time with the candidate than just about anyone else. You've said that vis-à-vis certain things, like going on a hunting trip, he would inform the candidate after the fact. But I presume by that you mean things that are more significant than ■ hunting trip he would inform the candidate or seek his permission if it was liable to have a significant bearing on the campaign.

MS. HICKS: I was asked for examples of things that he did without seeking his father's permission prior. That was an example. The significance of that has no bearing on, you know, the relevance of the example.

I don't want to speculate as to what he would or wouldn't tell his father about. I was merely stating and answering the question about were there times when he did things without his father's permission in the campaign. Yes, there were. Those were the examples that I gave.

I'm not going to speculate about what he would or would not have told his father about and what the significance of such would have had to have been in order for him to give forewarning.

MR. SCHIFF: Why don't you give as an example of the kind of thing he did seek permission from his father to do before undertaking?

MS. HICKS: Sorry. Can you repeat that?

MR. SCHIFF: Yeah. Why don't you give us an example of something the

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President's son did seek the approval of his father to undertake before doing it?

MS. HICKS: Inviting certain people that he felt would be appropriate to speak at the convention, he sought his father's permission before doing that.

MR. SCHIFF: In that case, who did he request permission to have speak at the convention?

MS. HICKS: I believe there were some of the folks associated with Benghazi. I don't know exactly their names, sorry, but some of the folks associated with that situation.

MR. SCHIFF: And what other examples can you give us of situations where he sought his father's permission before undertaking a campaign action?

MS. HICKS: I'm sure I can think of some and come back to you. I'd be happy to.

Again, I don't think you can, regardless of the examples I provide, I don't think that there's, you know, a standard that applies to these decisions, and I'm not going to go inside Donald Trump Jr.'s mind or Mr. Trump's mind and determine, you know, what's appropriate for a father, son to share.

MR. SCHIFF: No, I'm not asking you to give me examples. I'm not asking you to get inside anybody's head. So you've given two examples now. You've given us of an example, he sought permission before he invited convention speakers, he gave after-the-fact notice of when he went on a hunting trip in Iowa.

Can you give us any other examples of decisions he either sought the candidate's permission or informed him after the fact?

MS. HICKS: Sure. He -- in July of 2016, I recall there was the terrible shooting of the police officers in Dallas. We were as a campaign discussing, you know, campaign leadership team discussing what the candidate's response would

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be, if any.

I think that was Friday, July 10. We were in Trump Tower. He wasn't travelling that day. He didn't have any planned events. So there wasn't a natural response like in an interview or a speech that would be given. We were determining if it was appropriate for him to do something, to acknowledge that outside of a statement.

And Don Jr., without his father's permission, called somebody at NYPD to see if it would be appropriate for the candidate to make a visit to those officers and thank them for what they do every day.

The call was leaked to the media and ended up with a response from NYPD saying that they did not wish for the candidate to come visit them at that precinct or any other. And that is an example of something he did that's, you know, quite significant that he did not ask his father's permission for.

MR. SCHIFF: And when was that?

MS. HICKS: July of 2016.

MR. SCHIFF: July of 2016. And how precious of a commodity was the President's son's time, as one of the more high-profile surrogates? Was that in short supply? Was he being asked to travel? Was he being asked to go to events? Was he devoting himself pretty much full time to the campaign in the summer of 2016?

MS. HICKS: I can't speak to the amount of time Don was spending with the campaign relative to his other responsibilities. He was a high-profile surrogate and was, you know, certainly doing quite a bit on behalf of the campaign, traveling and media appearances, speaking engagements, and otherwise.

MR. SCHIFF: And he was still helping to run The Trump Organization while

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he was doing all that?

MS. HICKS: Yes, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: That sounds like a pretty busy schedule, isn't it?

MS. HICKS: So is candidate Trump. We were all wearing a lot of hats, so it didn't seem unusual to anybody. But, yes, it was a busy schedule.

MR. SCHIFF: Was that true of Jared Kushner as well?

MS. HICKS: Is it true that Jared was still running his company and working with the campaign? Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: So he had the same kind of enormous demands on his time?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And in June of '26, Paul Manafort was then the chair of the entire campaign?

MS. HICKS: Yes, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: So I imagine there were only certain meetings that he took as well, given the role as chair?

MS. HICKS: I can't speak to what meetings Paul took or didn't take or his schedule or -- I didn't -- I don't know Paul well. I didn't spend a lot of time with him. And, you know, he had his own team of folks that worked with him on the campaign that I also didn't know well, and we didn't interact much. So I can't speak to the meetings Paul would or would not take.

MR. SCHIFF: And was Don Jr. in a senior enough position in the campaign to be able to tell Paul Manafort what meetings to take or not take?

MS. HICKS: I think generally if the candidate's children asked you to do something that's thought to be a good thing to do.

██████████ Five minutes.

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MR. SCHIFF: And at a time when Don Jr.'s running his business, active role as a surrogate in the campaign, Jared Kushner is running his business, an active surrogate in the campaign, and Paul Manafort is chairing the campaign, a meeting that would bring all three of them together would have to be of a sufficient importance, wouldn't it?

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[1:27 p.m.]

MS. HICKS: I don't – I don't know why they all came together or what they thought the significance of that meeting was. Like I said, I didn't learn about it until well after the fact. I don't think it would be unusual for those three to meet. At any point during the day they were all working out of the same building. So it was not as if it was an inconvenience to all gather in one room in the same building. And again, I don't know what the circumstances were that brought them all to Trump Tower at that time on that day, other than they were all working there.

MR. SCHIFF: And if the President's son were convening a meeting with Jared Kushner, with Paul Manafort, and an attorney that was being dispatched from Russia to come provide dirt on Hillary Clinton, does ■ meeting like that fit more in the category of a hunting trip that the candidate would have been informed of after the fact, or a convention speaker, in which case, the candidate would have been asked before the meeting took place?

MS. HICKS: I don't know.

MR. SCHIFF: Mr. Swalwell.

MR. SWALWELL: Thank you.

Ms. Hicks, on April 17, 2016, were you leading the communications team for the campaign at that time?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Were you aware of a letter that Aras Agalarov sent to candidate Trump, letting candidate Trump know about an inquiry that Mr. Agalarov received from the Moscow Bureau Chief of The Washington Post?

MS. HICKS: I -- I don't recall, but it's possible.

MR. SWALWELL: Is that something that would probably come under your

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purview if a friend of the President's -- a friend of the candidates is receiving inquiries about the candidate and then is passing that information to the candidate?

MS. HICKS: Yes, there are occasions in which that has happened. I don't know this individual. I probably would have gone through Rhona or somebody else that does know this individual at The Trump Organization. That relationship and their interactions was well before my time with Mr. Trump. So I wouldn't be a point of contact.

MR. SWALWELL: But during the time of the campaign, was Rhona sophisticated enough and adept enough to know that if something that came across her desk that related to press, that it would make it makes its way to you, or she should make sure it makes its way to you?

MS. HICKS: Yes. The majority of the time, yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Are you familiar with a response that candidate Trump gave to Mr. Agalarov saying, Aras, they are bad news, but I am winning, I really appreciate your friendship. Say hello to the superstar. I miss you both. Best wishes, Donald Trump. Are you familiar with that correspondence?

MS. HICKS: I am now because somebody has shared it with me in the context of --

MR. SWALWELL: Who shared it with you?

MS. HICKS: -- other inquiries.

MR. SWALWELL: Who shared it with you?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall it at the time.

MR. SWALWELL: Who has shared it with you now?

MR. TROUT: That's going to get into communications with Special Counsel. We're not going to go into any communications with Special Counsel.

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MR. SWALWELL: Prior to being shown this correspondence, do you have an independent recollection of it taking place?

MS. HICKS: I don't.

██████████ 1 minute.

MR. SWALWELL: Are you familiar with a 29 February 2016 correspondence from Mr. Agalarov to Donald Trump wishing him well in the upcoming Super Tuesday contest?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Are you familiar with a handwritten response from candidate Trump back to Mr. Agalarov saying, Aras, you have done such a great job. You are an amazing man with a great family. Keep in touch and say hello to Emin.

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Have you also been shown that correspondence?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall seeing that, no.

MR. SWALWELL: I just want to be clear. Your testimony is that prior to learning about the Agalarovs in the press, you had never heard of that family while working for the Trumps?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall hearing the name or speaking about them internally at The Trump Organization.

MR. SWALWELL: I pass it on to you.

MR. KING: Ms. Hicks, you've answered every possible question about the June 2016 meeting, but if we are going to engage in hypotheticals, and since the candidate, it would not make sense for people to waste his time for somebody as unimportant. If Don Jr. was doing Goldstone a favor from his past experience as a

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promoter, and was bringing him in for a meeting, would it make sense he would not necessarily go to the candidate to tell him this meeting was coming up?

MS. HICKS: I think that's very plausible.

MR. KING: And if the meeting ended up nothing, with no consequence at all, would it also make sense that he wouldn't report to his father that a meeting he was doing as a favor to someone which ended up achieving nothing —

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. KING: -- that he would not waste his time talking to him about it?

MS. HICKS: Yes, I don't recall any specific occasions where any of the children volunteered that they had wasted time during their workday.

MR. KING: And you don't recall any time this meeting being discussed from June -- I mean, not even a reference without mentioning Goldstone, without mentioning any of the participants at the meeting. Do you recall them ever saying, we had a meeting with these Russians and we got nothing out of it?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. KING: If there was a dry hole and nothing turned up from it?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. KING: Did the candidate ever show any frustration? With all this talk in the media about how the Russians are helping and the Russians had all this information, that he only was getting it through newspapers accounts?

MS. HICKS: No. I only recall frustration being expressed that of the coverage — the content of those emails was not equal to the coverage of some of the things that were being reported about him.

MR. KING: Now also as I recall, there were Russian — these were hacked by the Russians, assume they were. Also negative to candidate Trump, I believe

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Colin Powell, there was a statement from Colin Powell, was hacked and released, which was extremely critical of candidate Trump.

MS. HICKS: I recall some of the media reporting about that. I don't recall the specifics.

MR. KING: I mean, not everything that was released was unfavorable to Hillary and not to President Trump?

MS. HICKS: I can't say for sure. I didn't read everything, but it's possible. I will take your word.

MR. KING: Anyone else?

MR. SWALWELL: Mr. King, do you want to take it down to 5 minutes left on the vote and then we'll recess?

MR. KING: Actually, I'll yield to you.

MR. SWALWELL: Or Mr. Schiff.

MR. SCHIFF: Just a couple quick follow-ups and then I will hand it off to Mr. Swalwell.

Since we're engaging in hypotheticals here, if the President's son was taking a meeting with Robert Goldstone merely as a courtesy, would he have gotten the campaign chair involved in that?

MS. HICKS: I think we know the answer to that, that's not a hypothetical. I think he – I think everyone knows who was present at the meeting, who he got involved in the meeting. So I don't really understand the question.

MR. SCHIFF: Well, the question is, my colleague was suggesting that this meeting was just done as a favor. If it was just a favor, you wouldn't bring the campaign chairman into it as a favor, would he?

MS. HICKS: I didn't suggest it was a favor.

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MR. SCHIFF: Okay.

MS. HICKS: So --

MR. SCHIFF: Okay. Mr. Swalwell.

MR. SWALWELL: Thank you.

Knowing the father-son relationship between Donald Trump and his son, Don Jr., were they close enough that if Don Jr. ever were to get in trouble, that Donald Trump Jr. -- Donald Trump Sr. would try and assist him, or give advice on what he should do to get out of trouble?

MS. HICKS: I mean, I don't think that that's characteristic specific to Mr. Trump and Donald Trump Jr. That sounds like a typical father-son relationship.

MR. SWALWELL: But it is something you observed, you did observe?

MS. HICKS: I --

MR. SWALWELL: Let's just talk during the campaign, and then we'll get to the June 9th statement. During the campaign when media inquiries were directed to activities of Donald Trump Jr., did you ever observe Donald Trump Jr.'s father try and assist him or give him guidance on how he should respond?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall.

MR. SWALWELL: Is that something you were ever a part of?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall anything specific about media inquiries.

MR. SWALWELL: Would you ever get media inquiries about Donald Trump Jr.?

MS. HICKS: Sure.

MR. SWALWELL: And when you got those inquiries, would you tell candidate Trump about them?

MS. HICKS: No, not always.

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MR. SWALWELL: But did you sometimes do that?

MS. HICKS: I think it depends on the content of the inquiry that also impacted the candidate, sure. If it was going to be a front-page story, sure.

MR. SWALWELL: I guess I want to be clear: Are you telling us that you never observed candidate Trump tell you or Donald Trump Jr. how a response should be given to a media inquiry regarding Donald Trump Jr.?

MR. TROUT: During the campaign?

MS. HICKS: During the campaign, the President weighed in on most media responses. I tended to share a lot with him, because he was very specific and particular about the messaging and what he wanted said. And the opportunity for him to weigh in himself. So, yeah, I shared a lot with him. If it was something totally unrelated, again, it would have to depend on the nature of that inquiry.

MR. SWALWELL: Would Donald Trump Jr. have been able to respond on his own?

MS. HICKS: Sorry, can we just --

[Discussion off the record.]

MR. SWALWELL: Would Donald Trump Jr. have been able to respond on his own without consulting his father with respect to a media inquiry?

MS. HICKS: Is he capable? Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Well, I'm not asking is he capable, did you ever see him do that based on your experience on the campaign?

MS. HICKS: Yes. Look, I think we're kind of getting into a lot of hypothetical questions, dancing around a certain situation that is far outside the scope of what we're talking about here today. If you guys have specific questions about what took place during the campaign, I'm happy to answer those. I can't

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speculate on hypothetical questions for the rest of the day.

MR. SWALWELL: Ms. Hicks, and these are restrictions that you've put on us, not restrictions we put on you. Did you ever see, during the campaign, Donald Trump Jr., on his own, respond to any media inquiry without consulting his father?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: And when did that occur?

MS. HICKS: Oh, countless times, I'm sure. I wouldn't be aware of all of them because I would have been with his father.

MR. SWALWELL: I'm just asking about the ones you observed.

MS. HICKS: I -- I don't have any specific examples, but he did media interviews on his own. He spoke to reporters on his own. So I don't -- I can't recall any specific examples. It was a practice to respond to reporters without consulting me, or his father, or anybody else on the campaign. At a certain point, you know, as Mr. Schiff alluded to, the children were sort of the key surrogates on the campaign, and they had the freedom to communicate with reporters, or others, without permission from the candidate.

MR. SWALWELL: Great. I think we'll take a break there, if that's all right Mr. King.

MR. KING: Mr. Schiff, to answer your question, I believe there are five votes so why don't we say 2:15 or 2:30?

MR. SCHIFF: Sure.

MR. KING: I would just like to say for the record, as far as I'm concerned, once we engage more hypotheticals, our side is pretty much finished as far as asking everything we have to. Obviously, we will stay as long as we have to, but I do want to just thank Ms. Hicks for answering the questions.

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MS. HICKS: Thank you.

MR. KING: I'm sure it's a wonderful experience you've had, but thank you very much.

MR. SCHIFF: So resume at 2:15?

MR. TROUT: Sure.

[Recess.]

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[2:16 p.m.]

MR. SWALWELL: Ms. Hicks, we're back on the record. Welcome back. Other than yourself and family members to Mr. Trump, who would you describe were the closest people to him during the campaign.

MS. HICKS: Keith Schiller; when he was on the campaign, Corey Lewandowski; later, Kellyanne Conway; and Steve Bannon; Dan Scavino --

MR. SWALWELL: How about Ms. Graff?

MS. HICKS: -- MacAntee (ph).

Yes. She's very close to him.

MR. SWALWELL: How would you describe her knowledge of people who are important to Donald Trump?

MS. HICKS: I think Rhona is very knowledgeable about Mr. Trump's relationships and individuals that are in his orbit or seeking to be.

MR. SWALWELL: How would you assess her memory? Meaning, like, is she someone who would retain a lot of information that could assist in telling Mr. Trump who is important, who's not, who he's met with, who he hasn't?

MS. HICKS: I can't speak to her memory, but she's worked there for many years so she has a lot of institutional knowledge.

MR. SWALWELL: How about Mr. Schiller, would you also describe him as someone who has a lot of institutional knowledge, based on your dealings with him?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: How would you describe the relationship between Mr. Trump and Mr. Schiller? Was it just businesslike, or did you also observe them to, perhaps, also be, like, friends?

MS. HICKS: They had a very close relationship. I think it was always clear

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that Mr. Trump was the boss, and Keith was an employer -- an employee like just like all of us. No matter how close the relationship, but I think they had -- there were certainly components of friendship to their relationship.

MR. SWALWELL: How about your relationship with Mr. Trump? How would you describe it?

MS. HICKS: We have a close relationship.

MR. SWALWELL: Closer than just an employer-employee relationship? Meaning like, is he someone that you trust and can confide in?

MS. HICKS: We have ■ relationship that I would say is not typical of an employer-employee, in sort of the sense that we spend a lot more time together. We're often in unusual situations, often high-stress, high-intensity situations. We have developed a very close relationship, but --

MR. SWALWELL: Would you describe yourself as loyal to Mr. Trump?

MS. HICKS: I don't know what your definition of loyalty is, but --

MR. SWALWELL: Well, what's your definition?

MS. HICKS: A sense of commitment.

MR. SWALWELL: Would you describe yourself as committed to Mr. Trump?

MS. HICKS: Yes. I have made a commitment to Mr. Trump and I've obviously seen that through for quite a long time.

MR. SWALWELL: Has Mr. Trump ever asked you to lie for him?

MR. TROUT: We're going have to confer.

MR. SWALWELL: Let the record reflect about 3 minutes ago, I asked if Ms. Hope Hicks had ever been asked to lie for the President and she's conferring with counsel.

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[Discussion off the record.]

MR. SWALWELL: Back on the record. At 2:15, I asked Ms. Hicks if she had ever lied for Mr. Trump. It is 2:25, she has conferred with counsel. Ms. Hicks?

MR. TROUT: I think the question was whether he'd asked her to lie.

MR. SWALWELL: That is correct, counselor, if Mr. Trump had ever asked Ms. Hicks to lie for him.

MS. HICKS: Mr. Trump has never asked me to lie with respect to Russia, or any investigations, or inquiries pertaining to. And beyond that, I decline to answer.

MR. SWALWELL: Ms. Hicks, thank you for clarifying, but my question was more broadly, has Mr. Trump ever asked you to lie for him?

MS. HICKS: And I decline to answer the broader question.

MR. SWALWELL: Under what basis are you declining to answer?

MR. TROUT: She is declining to answer because she's declining to answer.

MR. SWALWELL: Well, counsel, is she stating a legal assertion for declining to answer?

MR. TROUT: She is here voluntarily and she is answering the questions that are relevant to the committee's questions and investigation. Beyond that, she's declining to answer this question in the broad sense in which you asked it.

MR. SWALWELL: Well, Mr. Chairman, I would ask that we then issue a subpoena. I mean, this is --

MR. CONAWAY: Let's just keep asking the questions and get all of that on the record and then we'll have that conversation. We're not going to do it question by question. I would suggest that you stay with the four questions that we're trying to answer.

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MR. SCHIFF: If I could, Mr. Chairman, and I know we'll have a longer discussion about this when we conclude, but I think we ought to follow the same procedure we did with Mr. Bannon, which was issue a subpoena while the interview was going on. This witness has refused to answer exactly the same questions that Mr. Bannon refused to answer, and we subpoenaed him on the spot. More than that, it's clear now even beyond any White House request that she not answer questions, that she is deciding to refuse to answer questions even concerning conversations that took place during the campaign.

It's not for the witness to decide whether those questions are relevant or not relevant. If the President asked her to lie about a conversation she had with Don Jr., it may be about Russia or it may be not about Russia. It is still relevant about whether we can expect the truth, and it is not a permissible basis.

So I want to reiterate our request that we treat this witness exactly the same as the last witness we had in exactly the same position and that is to serve them with a subpoena now and not delay.

MR. CONAWAY: Thank you for that. We're going to continue to ask every question that you want to ask. Let's get every single one of those on the record, topic areas that you want to cover that the witness is not answering. And then we as a committee will address that once that is finished.

MR. SCHIFF: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Swalwell.

MR. SWALWELL: When did Mr. Trump last ask you to lie for him?

MR. TROUT: It's not -- she's already testified that he never asked her to lie for him or to lie on any matter relating to the subject of this investigation and -- just not going to respond.

MR. SWALWELL: Ms. Hicks, are you refusing the answer?

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MS. HICKS: Decline to answer.

MR. SWALWELL: Ms. Hicks, how many times has Mr. Trump asked you to lie for him?

MR. TROUT: You can answer.

MR. SWALWELL: Are you declining to answer?

MS. HICKS: I'm declining to answer.

MR. SWALWELL: Ms. Hicks, how many times have you lied for Mr. Trump?

MR. TROUT: Same answer.

MS. HICKS: Same answer.

MR. SWALWELL: Are you refusing to answer?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Ms. Hicks, have you ever lied for Mr. Trump?

MR. TROUT: Same answer.

MS. HICKS: Same answer.

MR. SWALWELL: Ms. Hicks, are you refusing to answer whether you've ever lied for Mr. Trump?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: If I could, Mr. Swalwell, as I mentioned earlier, it is not up to the witness or her attorney to decide what is relevant or not relevant, it's up to the committee to decide. But even under the most strained interpretation of what's relevant or not relevant, if this witness has lied on behalf of Mr. Trump, that is directly relevant to her credibility as a witness. Are you refusing to answer that question, Ms. Hicks?

MS. HICKS: Can we confer?

MR. TROUT: Yes.

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[Discussion off the record.]

MR. SWALWELL: Mr. Schiff was still controlling the time. Just for the record, we had taken a break at 3:30, when Mr. Schiff asked if she'd ever lied for Mr. Trump. It's now 3:40, but I believe if we could have maybe the court reporter -- 2:40. Maybe if the reporter could read back the last question.

[The reporter read back the record as requested.]

MS. HICKS: So I just wanted to be very clear, given the circumstances here, and I am a press person, so often asked to provide, you know, the best possible version of the truth, but I have never -- I don't believe I've ever knowingly lied for Mr. Trump. With that being said, I'm given information that I'm asked to use in response to questions in other contexts. So I can only rely on information that's being given. But I've never, to my knowledge, knowingly lied.

MR. SWALWELL: Is it your testimony, then, that if you've never knowingly lied for Mr. Trump, that if he has asked you in the past to lie for him, that you did not do so?

MS. HICKS: Look, I'm just hesitating a little bit, because it's a very broad question to ask. I've never been asked to lie, like I said, about anything having to do with the scope of your investigation. But have I been asked to tell white lies, like tell somebody I'm not available because of X when, in fact, it was Y. Sure.

So I just don't feel comfortable answering the question definitively, but I can say that I've always operated with integrity. And like I said, I've never, to my knowledge, knowingly lied on behalf of somebody. And, in terms of somebody else asking me to say things that aren't necessarily totally true, again, there are a lot of instances where that is not of consequence or outside the norm at all. And so I don't want to respond to your question in any definitive way that will, you know, give

an overbroad or definitive answer to something that I can't be definitive about.

MR. SWALWELL: Has Mr. Trump ever asked you to give a response, or to act on his behalf in a way that is not necessarily true to use your words?

MS. HICKS: Like I said, there are certainly instances that are not of any consequence or significance.

MR. SWALWELL: What were those instances?

MS. HICKS: I just mentioned one. And I'm going to decline to discuss private conversations any further. I feel like I've answered the question to the best of my ability and I'm here trying to be truthful and forthcoming. You can talk to others. I have a track record of being a credible person that operates with integrity. And I feel that I've answered the question.

██████████ Mr. Rooney.

MR. SWALWELL: Actually, ██████████ I hope you weren't counting the 20 minutes that they took against me that they were conferring outside. So about 20 minutes was eaten up with counsel being outside conferring, and I think that's been counted.

██████████ It has not.

MR. ROONEY: I only have one question, Eric, and then Pete.

I think it is important getting to Adam's question with regard to that we clarify for the record what he said was for the integrity of this process, that -- and for the credibility of this process, that the witnesses that come here are truthful and if they say something that is not truthful, then that goes to the credibility of this process. But I think that the question should be raised, or should be phrased in this way: Have you lied about anything that you've testified here today?

MS. HICKS: No, sir.

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MR. ROONEY: Have you, to the best of your ability so far, given answers to what you believe is the truth?

MS. HICKS: Yes, sir.

MR. ROONEY: So I take that as to mean -- because I think we can go down this road as asking Ms. Hicks if she's ever been told to tell somebody that Mr. Trump's not in the office, or that he's running late. I mean, we could literally turn blue going down that road of anything that could or could not be necessarily completely truthful. But I think with regard to this committee, and our questions which, I think, is important to establish for the record that what you said goes to the credibility and the relevance of that question that you're asking, is if she's telling the truth here today or not. If is she is admitting that she has told a lie today, then yeah, the whole testimony goes out the window. But if it's her testimony that she's not lied with regard to the questions today, then I think that that's the most important thing for us to continue. If we can't, then we can't. But to continue to ask questions whether or not Mr. Trump ever asked her to tell whose ever is on the line that he's not here or something like, I mean, literally, we could be here all day long.

So hopefully you will continue to answer questions truthfully and that we can continue moving on. I get what you're getting at, but hopefully, to preserve the sanctity of this process, we can do so in a truthful way.

That's all I have. Peter.

MR. KING: Tom. I would add on that, unless we are trying to create a perjury trap here, the fact is, that if you're a communications for a corporation, for a candidate, for a campaign, the whole idea of being a spin doctor of trying to put something in the best possible light, could maybe later on be looked upon as a lie, whether or not you intended it or not. I mean, if you do not take a set of facts, I

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mean, any campaign, you have a whole set of facts and three people interpret them differently. You are putting it in the best light. You are putting in the facts you think are most important to you.

If we held that standard, there would probably no Member of Congress left, or no Members of the United States Senate and very few corporate CEOs. I think that -- if somebody had a particular question did you lie on this, did you lie on that, that's a different story, but an open ended question like that, with people looking back on it later on can say, oh, in this particular moment in Iowa, or Nebraska, or New Jersey you said you weren't going to meet with this guy or you were going to meet with them or you were going to maybe endorse them, but you really never intended to endorse them. Are they lies? Or is that what is done every day in real life? So, I think, again, unless we are just trying to set up a trap here, or to have something that can be used for the media later on, I would say that, Ms. Hicks, the question is, to her, as Mr. Rooney said is, is she telling the truth today? If she's not, then she has to face the consequences. But other than that, to say if a person ever lied, or has the person ever told something that could be interpreted as a lie? Has anyone ever said anything which maybe was shading the truth? Again, you go through all the press secretaries on Capitol Hill, and it is different.

Many of us can tell the difference between a lie and shading the truth, or putting something in the best possible light. But again, whether we're talking about the Clinton campaign, or we are talking about anyone's campaign, there are always certain issues that can have two interpretations, and you put it in the best possible light.

So that's why I understand the position. I consider myself the most honorable person in the world, but I wouldn't answer that question.

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MR. ROONEY: The Irish are the biggest liars of them all.

MR. KING: Well -- but I just told one. No, but seriously, if you want to play this, we can do this all afternoon. But if we really want to find out what happened during the campaign, whether or not there was ever any Russian collusion, I think we should go forward with other questions.

MR. CONAWAY: 30 minutes.

MR. SWALWELL: Mr. Schiff.

MR. SCHIFF: Yes. Whether a witness has lied on behalf of a client in the past is clearly relevant to their credibility.

Ms. Hicks, you said earlier that when you were asked the question whether Mr. Trump had asked you to lie for him that he had not asked you to lie for him vis-à-vis Russia and the subject of this investigation. The clear implication was that he had asked you to lie for him about other things. We're clearly not asking you about white lies, like did you like your breakfast, Mr. Trump. What we are asking you is has he asked you to lie about substantive matters before and have you done so on his behalf?

I think that's a perfectly appropriate question. And concerning that it seems to be such a difficult question.

MR. ROONEY: That actually wasn't the question. It was have you ever lied? So if it is substantive --

MR. SWALWELL: No, no. You weren't here, Mr. Rooney. I asked her if Mr. Trump ever asked her to lie.

MS. HICKS: I'm comfortable answering a question pertaining to issues of substance and the answer to that is no. And I decline to answer further, so -- I've never been asked to lie about anything substantive, whether it relates to the issues

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pertaining to this inquiry, this committee, others or anything of substance. So again, I'd like to be very careful given the circumstances here, but as a gentleman on this side of the room has pointed out that's quite a broad question, and one I can't answer definitively.

I've said that I don't believe I've ever knowingly lied on behalf of this individual, never been asked to lie about any issues of substance pertaining to this committee or otherwise. And outside of that, I decline to answer.

MR. SWALWELL: Have you ever seen or witnessed Mr. Trump ask others to lie in your presence?

MS. HICKS: I decline to answer.

MR. SWALWELL: Why?

MR. TROUT: Because she is not going to answer.

MR. SWALWELL: Has Ivanka Trump ever asked you to lie?

MS. HICKS: I decline to answer.

MR. SWALWELL: Has Donald Trump Jr. ever asked you to lie?

MS. HICKS: I decline to answer.

MR. SWALWELL: Has Corey Lewandowski ever asked you to lie?

MS. HICKS: I decline to answer.

MR. SWALWELL: Has Paul Manafort ever asked you to lie?

MS. HICKS: I decline to answer.

MR. SWALWELL: Has Steve Bannon ever asked you to lie?

MS. HICKS: I decline to answer.

MR. SWALWELL: Has Eric Trump ever asked you to lie?

MS. HICKS: I decline to answer.

MR. SWALWELL: Has Brad Parscale ever asked you to lie?

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MS. HICKS: I decline to answer.

MR. SWALWELL: Has Alan Futerfas ever asked you to lie?

MS. HICKS: Decline to answer.

MR. SWALWELL: Has Alan Garten ever asked you to lie?

MS. HICKS: I decline to answer.

MR. SWALWELL: Has Michael Cohen ever asked you to lie?

MS. HICKS: I decline to answer.

MR. SWALWELL: Ms. Hicks, when you had dinner with Mr. Manafort and candidate Trump at Mar-A-Lago, did Mr. Manafort ever mention his prior work in Ukraine?

MS. HICKS: Not that I recall.

MR. SWALWELL: Did Mr. Trump ever speak with you separate from Mr. Manafort about any knowledge Mr. Trump had about Mr. Manafort's work in Ukraine?

MS. HICKS: Only based on things that were being reported in the press.

MR. SWALWELL: What did Mr. Trump say?

MS. HICKS: I think I went over this earlier. Generally speaking, after Paul came on board, I remember some comments from the candidate about how positive the coverage was, both about him sort of professionalizing the campaign operation and --

MR. SWALWELL: No, Ms. Hicks, I understand. We did talk about that earlier. I'm talking about you and Mr. Trump discussing Mr. Manafort's work in Ukraine. Was that ever discussed between you and Mr. Trump?

MS. HICKS: Again, not out of the context of the press reports.

MR. SWALWELL: Was there ever any concern about Mr. Manafort stealing

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money from the Trump campaign?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Who had that concern?

MS. HICKS: I don't want to speak for others, it was ■ concern that I had.

MR. SWALWELL: Why did you have that concern?

MS. HICKS: It was a concern I discussed with Alan Weiselberg (ph) who was the CFO of The Trump Organization; and Keith Schiller, Corey Lewandowski, Jeff Dewitt and Mr. Trump.

MR. SWALWELL: To your knowledge, why was Mr. Manafort -- why was the arrangement such that he was ■ volunteer campaign chairperson rather than ■ paid campaign official?

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[2:59 p.m.]

MS. HICKS: I don't know. I wasn't involved in the discussions about the arrangement. I can certainly speculate as to why he would have wanted it that way, but it's probably not my place.

MR. SWALWELL: Were you ever familiar with Mr. Manafort's views toward Russia while working with him on the campaign?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SWALWELL: When Mr. Trump, back in July 2016, made the invitation to Russia to hack Secretary Clinton's emails, had he already been aware that emails had been hacked?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: When, to your knowledge, when was Mr. Trump first made aware that DNC emails had been hacked?

MS. HICKS: I believe in June when the first information from the hack was the, quote, opposition research file about him.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you tell him?

MS. HICKS: Yes, I did.

MR. SWALWELL: Were you the first person to tell him, to your knowledge?

MS. HICKS: I don't know if I was the first person.

MR. SWALWELL: What was his reaction?

MS. HICKS: He wanted to know what was in the file and if, like -- if -- how we were going to manage whatever negative press was coming as a result.

MR. SWALWELL: Why would he think that negative press would come your way as a result of an independent hacking of your opponent's emails?

MS. HICKS: Because I think that the first piece of information was pages of

opposition research about Mr. Trump. I think he was concerned about what that might say.

MR. SWALWELL: Was he worried that he or the campaign might be blamed for the hacking?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Was there a continuous discussion among the campaign about obtaining the, quote/unquote, deleted 33,000 Hillary Clinton emails?

MS. HICKS: Like I said before, you know, it was a talking point in all of the speeches and interviews. And I can recall an instance or two of a hypothetical conversation about, you know, oh, what if somebody got those or I wonder where those are.

MR. SWALWELL: Who would be saying that?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall anyone specifically. It was mostly in preparation for, as I can remember, like on the plane, in transit, reading news reports or speeches.

MR. SWALWELL: And I'm just talking about your observations of Mr. Trump. Is it your testimony that he had hypothetically said, wouldn't it be nice or wouldn't it be useful if --

MS. HICKS: I didn't say that.

MR. SWALWELL: Well, who said it?

MS. HICKS: I didn't say wouldn't it be nice or useful.

MR. SWALWELL: Well, who said it?

MS. HICKS: I said I wonder if they exist, what if they were available.

MR. SWALWELL: And who were you talking about that said that?

MS. HICKS: I didn't say it would be nice or useful. You said that.

MR. SWALWELL: Well, who was speaking, though? You're kind of speaking broadly.

MS. HICKS: Yeah. I --

MR. SWALWELL: Which individuals?

MS. HICKS: This is 2 years ago. I'm sort of remembering things as you're asking me the questions.

MR. SWALWELL: I understand. But you've given us particular dates of when you were in Iowa and when you were in Indiana and when you were elsewhere. And so you remember that somebody was talking about, you know, hypothetically about the Clinton emails, and I'm asking you who was talking about that?

MS. HICKS: Sure. I'm trying to answer the question.

So it would have been any number of people involved in the discussion, and I think it's more than possible that Mr. Trump was one of the people suggesting, you know, or sort of hypothesizing, what if these were available, what if somebody had them, surely.

MR. SWALWELL: Was Michael Flynn ever involved in those discussions?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall Michael Flynn being involved in those discussions.

MR. SWALWELL: Has Michael Flynn ever asked you to lie for him?

MS. HICKS: Can I confer?

[Discussion off the record]

MS. HICKS: Not during the campaign.

MR. SWALWELL: After the campaign, did Michael Flynn ever ask you to lie for him?

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MR. TROUT: Again, this --

MS. HICKS: I think also there's a --

MR. TROUT: -- is in the transition period, and she's been instructed not to discuss conversations or events after the Election Day.

MS. HICKS: There's also a difference between somebody saying will you lie for me or giving false information and presenting that as truth.

MR. SWALWELL: Did Michael Flynn ever present information that you knew to be false but he wanted you to represent to be true?

MS. HICKS: Not during the campaign.

MR. SWALWELL: Did he ever present to you information you knew to be false that you knew -- that he knew to -- that you knew to be false that he wanted you to represent as being true after the campaign?

MS. HICKS: I'm sorry. Could we have that read back?

MR. SWALWELL: It was pretty inarticulate. I can say it again if that's easier.

MR. TROUT: Might be easier.

MR. SWALWELL: Did Mr. Flynn post-campaign ever ask you to represent something that you knew to be false that he wanted you to represent to be true?

MS. HICKS: It was after the campaign.

MR. TROUT: Yeah, this is after the campaign. So she is operating on the instructions not to discuss things that happened after the campaign.

MR. SWALWELL: And, Ms. Hicks, I just want to be clear now, because you have quite affirmatively testified that during the campaign Mr. Flynn never asked you to lie on his behalf or to represent something that you knew to be false as being true, but you were declining to answer as to whether a whole host of previously

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listed individuals tried to have you do the same thing. Is that correct? Is that still your position?

MR. TROUT: Yes.

MS. HICKS: Yeah.

MR. SWALWELL: When did Mr. Trump first become aware that WikiLeaks was a part of disseminating hacked Clinton team emails?

MS. HICKS: I don't know the answer to that. Whenever it was publicly reported, I imagine.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you ever hear -- and I'm talking about separate from public statements of Mr. Trump -- did you ever hear Mr. Trump discuss what WikiLeaks was doing in the campaign?

MS. HICKS: Sorry. Can you ask that --

MR. SWALWELL: Would Mr. Trump ever discuss with you or anyone around you what WikiLeaks was doing throughout the campaign with hacked emails?

MS. HICKS: Just conversationally, based on news coverage --

MR. SWALWELL: What did he say?

MS. HICKS: -- sure.

I don't recall anything specific, but, again, nothing privately that he didn't say publicly.

MR. SWALWELL: Mr. Trump said publicly, quite publicly, "I love WikiLeaks." Would it be fair to say that that was also his private assessment of WikiLeaks?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall him ever saying that in private, and I remember having a good laugh when he said it publicly. But --

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MR. SWALWELL: Were you a part of the campaign's decision to use the fruits of different hacks that occurred throughout the campaign? And I mean for the campaign to use in either talking points, campaign advertisements, tweets, or the candidate's own statements information that was illicitly derived from the hacks.

MS. HICKS: Yes, I was involved.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. When did that -- how was that decision made?

MS. HICKS: I was involved in the press and communications operation of the campaign, and that became part of our messaging strategy. So I imagine it was sometime after that information was publicly available.

MR. SWALWELL: Was there ever a discussion or concern about --

MS. HICKS: Now, don't forget also, we were being publicly accused of coordinating this. So for then people to say isn't it terrible they're using this information, I would argue that it's far more terrible to be accused of coordinating the hack itself. So --

MR. CONAWAY: Mr. Swalwell, excuse me, Eric, 15-minute break. It's our turn. We're going to take a break.

MR. SWALWELL: I thought we had said 30 for the last --

MR. CONAWAY: I know. I lied. I thought we switched to 30, but I didn't lie on purpose.

MR. ROONEY: You liar.

MR. CONAWAY: I know. It's terrible.

The White House has asked you to call your contact at the White House. And so we'll take a break while that happens.

[Recess.]

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[3:42 p.m.]

MR. CONAWAY: Back on the record.

So to clarify, earlier, when I popped off and said I lied about the 30-minute session, it's 15 minutes back and forth. I was mistaken earlier.

So, Mr. Swalwell, 15 minutes.

MR. TROUT: Congressman, could I interject?

The call from the White House related to questions about the transition period. Maybe they were -- the White House counsel was not aware that questions about the transition period were asked during the appearance before the Senate Select Committee and answered.

And so we have gone back with them and spent some time with them to get clearance to provide similar information, you know, the same information to this committee. If there are other questions relating to the transition that were not the subject of questions by the Senate, I would like to get those on the table so that I could go back to the White House and make sure that we have their position, either, "Yes, that's fine," or, "No, that's not fine."

But in the meantime, we are certainly willing to certainly listen to questions relating to the transition based upon revised instructions from the White House.

MR. CONAWAY: So how will we know -- we don't have any contacts with the Senate, so how will we know what the Senate asked?

MR. TROUT: Well, I just assume that you all have some questions relating to the transition.

MR. CONAWAY: We do.

MR. TROUT: And if you have those questions, I think they ought to be asked. And, you know, for all I know, you all have better questions than the

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senators chose to --

MR. CONAWAY: Well, but you were saying you were going to limit it to what the Senate has said.

MR. TROUT: No.

MR. CONAWAY: We don't know what the Senate asked.

MR. TROUT: Well, I understand that. What I'm saying is is that if you ask the questions and we realize those questions are questions that we can answer, we will answer them.

MR. CONAWAY: All right.

MR. TROUT: If they are questions that we don't know whether we can answer them, we'd like to take those down, know what they are, and be able, at some appropriate point, take another break, get back in touch with the White House, and if we can, get permission to answer those questions as well.

I mean, I think we can, if you want to speed the process up, I think we can probably provide some information to this committee that we — that Ms. Hicks recalls were the subjects in the Senate.

MR. SWALWELL: Can you say that again?

MR. TROUT: I think we can to speed the process up, rather than to see whether you're going to ask the right question, we can go ahead and talk about the information that we know we previously provided.

MR. SWALWELL: I think that might be better than playing Marco Polo with the questions.

MR. TROUT: Yeah, I agree.

MR. CONAWAY: All right. So, Ms. Hicks, if you wouldn't mind giving us as detailed a synopsis of your conversation with the Senate as you possibly can,

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reference the transition period.

MS. HICKS: Sure. I think the topics they were most interested in or that we covered were the U.N. vote, the call to the Russian ambassador in late December by General Flynn, the media reporting afterwards, mostly the David Ignatius column. That was sort of the subject of some of these reports about what was said and what wasn't. The December 1 meeting in Trump Tower.

MR. SCHIFF: What was that last one?

MS. HICKS: The December 1 meeting in Trump Tower with the Russian ambassador. I think that's it.

MR. CONAWAY: All right. Well, Eric and Adam, 15 minutes.

MR. SCHIFF: Mr. Swalwell.

MS. HICKS: Yeah, and this wasn't a question specific to the transition. This was about if I had any contacts with Russians up until inauguration day, and I was contacted by somebody who works at the embassy after the election. So I responded to questions about that.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. Thank you.

I'll go back to where we left off, which was candidate Trump's views of WikiLeaks, just to refresh you.

Did you ever direct message during the campaign on Twitter?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you have a Twitter account on the campaign?

MS. HICKS: Yeah. I have an account that I use to view mainly his tweets, but I don't tweet or engage, participate.

MR. SWALWELL: Did your account allow you to receive direct messages? Whether you sent them out on your own or not, were you able to at least receive

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direct messages?

MS. HICKS: I don't see why my account would be different from anybody else's account.

MR. SWALWELL: Well, it's like a setting where you can choose to allow people to direct message you or not. So I'm asking, did yours allow people to direct message you?

MS. HICKS: I don't know what the setting is. I've never received a direct message.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. Do you recall in August of 2016, when Roger Stone tweeted to the -- Roger Stone tweeted that John Podesta was about to spend his time in the barrel or a tweet to that nature?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. Did you or anyone else make Mr. Trump aware of this tweet?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall making him aware of it. I don't know if anybody else did or if he saw reports of it.

MR. SWALWELL: During this time period, was Mr. Trump in telephone contact with Mr. Stone?

MS. HICKS: I can't answer that question.

MR. SWALWELL: I guess, just from your personal observation of Mr. Trump, did you ever see him, or did he ever talk to you about telephone calls that he had with Mr. Stone?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall any conversations with -- or outreach or incoming from Mr. Stone at this time.

MR. SWALWELL: Are you familiar with the documentary "Get Me Roger

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Stone"?

MS. HICKS: I've heard of it, yeah.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you assist Mr. Trump at all in his appearance in that documentary?

MS. HICKS: I wasn't aware that he made an appearance in the documentary.

MR. SWALWELL: It was a documentary that was released actually in spring 2017. Have you seen the documentary?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Where Mr. Trump appears to have made a contemporaneous to the election -- actually post-election appearance in the documentary. You're not familiar with that?

MS. HICKS: I've never seen it.

MR. SWALWELL: Where Mr. Trump talks about work that Roger Stone did during the campaign and up to the election?

MS. HICKS: I've never seen the documentary. I don't know what you're talking about. No one's ever raised it to my attention. So obviously I didn't coordinate it.

MR. SWALWELL: So Mr. Trump could have made a documentary appearance without the communications director knowing?

MS. HICKS: I think it sounds like it's very possible.

MR. SWALWELL: You testified earlier that Jared Kushner had told the Secret Service about a Guccifer contact he had. How do you have knowledge of that?

MS. HICKS: Jared received the email when we were traveling on the plane,

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and he said: I just received this email.

MR. SWALWELL: He said that to you?

MS. HICKS: Yes, and asked me what I thought of it. I thought it seemed like junk mail, not like a real thing. I think he, like I said earlier, he made the Secret Service aware of it or maybe he asked the Secret Service what he should do with it, if there was some kind of agency, FBI maybe, that he should direct it to.

I don't know what that conversation consisted of, but I know that that's where he -- he was going to speak to an agent about the email.

MR. SWALWELL: Do you remember Russia being involved in the email or the words "Russia" in the email?

MS. HICKS: I don't. My recollection of the email was sort of a threat to pay a certain amount of money in order to maintain the privacy of Mr. Trump's tax return.

MR. SWALWELL: What day was this?

MS. HICKS: I believe it was October 30.

MR. SWALWELL: Have you spoke with Mr. Kushner about this interaction since October 30, 2016?

MS. HICKS: Not that I recall.

MR. SWALWELL: Is it possible then that you have?

MS. HICKS: I don't -- I mean, certainly possible. I don't remember speaking to him about it again.

MR. SWALWELL: Did Mr. Kushner ever come to you in June 2016 with the same type of concern about where to go, which agency to seek out, when he --

MS. HICKS: He --

MR. SWALWELL: No, hold on. Let me finish the question.

Did Mr. Kushner come to you in June 2016, same type of concern that you

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just expressed, asking which agency he should go to when he received a June 2016 email that subject line was "Russia, Clinton, private, confidential"?

MS. HICKS: So two things. One, I didn't say that he asked me what agency he should go to. I said that he asked me what I thought of the email.

And then the conclusion of that conversation was that he was going to go speak to the Secret Service, I assumed to ask if there was a security risk associated with receiving this and perhaps to direct it elsewhere. I don't know that. That's speculation.

Our conversation was about what I thought of the contents of the email. I said I felt like it was spam and not to engage in it.

MR. SWALWELL: And did he arrive at the idea of going to the Secret Service or did you suggest that to him?

MS. HICKS: I did not suggest that. That was his conclusion.

And the second piece of this is, we were sitting next to each other on a 4-hour flight, both working on emails, so sort of a natural exchange. I don't know that he would have shared something that he received months prior in a very different context.

MR. SWALWELL: But at least in this context, October 30, 2016, Jared Kushner reads his email, is concerned that a foreigner is making a threat, and he at least thinks aloud to you that he should go to the Secret Service?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall any concern about it being a foreigner. I think it was more that it was an extortion attempt. Legitimate or not, he wanted to raise that concern with somebody else.

My only knowledge of that email exchange is what I'm telling you now, that he asked me what I thought of the email. I said it looked like spam or something like

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that. And he concluded by saying he was going to share it with the Secret Service. I have no additional knowledge of that exchange.

MR. SWALWELL: Jared Kushner come across to you at least as someone who reads their emails?

MS. HICKS: Yes, generally speaking.

MR. SWALWELL: Has Jared Kushner ever asked you to lie for him?

MS. HICKS: I decline to answer.

MR. SWALWELL: You mentioned earlier that there, from a messaging standpoint, there were conversations with Mr. Trump to accept the Intelligence Community assessment that Russia was responsible for the hacking. What specifically was recommended to Mr. Trump?

MS. HICKS: I think we went over this just --

MR. SWALWELL: Well, you just -- you told us from a messaging standpoint, but you never told us what message was relayed to Mr. Trump.

MS. HICKS: Just that it would be helpful, in terms of getting folks to focus on the content rather than pick something apart on our response, if he would embrace what was generally being messaged from other components, like the media and the Clinton campaign. And I don't know if the Intelligence Community had shared its conclusion of its assessment at this time in October.

MR. SWALWELL: During the transition period in early January, when the Intelligence Community assessment came out, what was Mr. Trump's reaction?

MR. TROUT: We're going to take that under advisement.

MR. SWALWELL: In October 2016, during the campaign, when the Intelligence Community assessed that Russia was attempting to interfere in the election, what was Mr. Trump's reaction?

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MS. HICKS: Like I said, his private reaction was the same reaction he shared publicly in the debate forum and other public forums.

MR. SWALWELL: What was your recommendation to him?

MS. HICKS: I just shared that.

MR. SWALWELL: No, you shared what others have recommended. What specifically did you believe he should say about Russia meddling prior to the election?

MS. HICKS: My recommendation was aligned with the rest of the people I referenced broadly, that it would be best from a messaging perspective to embrace what others were saying so as not to allow them to pick apart that piece of our response and focus on the content of the emails.

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[4:00 p.m.]

MR. SWALWELL: Was there anyone who was on Mr. Trump's side?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall.

MR. SWALWELL: I yield to Mr. Schiff.

MR. SCHIFF: And I know we're jumping around a bit. We're going to try to finish with the campaign later, but let me start, if I can, with the transition.

In May of last year, The Washington Post reported that Jared Kushner had a meeting with Sergey Kislyak as well as Mike Flynn December 1st in Trump Tower New York that included a discussion of using Russian diplomatic facilities in the U.S. to communicate as part of a back channel.

Were you aware of this meeting at the time it took place?

██████████ Five minutes.

MS. HICKS: I was not, no.

MR. SCHIFF: And when did you first become aware of it?

MS. HICKS: In -- after the inauguration.

MR. SCHIFF: And how did you become aware of it?

MS. HICKS: A press inquiry initially.

MR. SCHIFF: And what was the response when you received the press inquiry? How did you proceed from that point?

MS. HICKS: Part of the administration.

MR. TROUT: Yes, now we're after January 20th, and that's not something that she's authorized to discuss.

MR. SCHIFF: So at no point during the campaign did you become aware of this meeting -- or during the transition?

MS. HICKS: No.

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MR. SCHIFF: And by that, I take it that neither Mr. Kushner or Mr. Flynn or anyone else told you they were meeting with the Russian Ambassador at that time?

MS. HICKS: That is correct.

MR. SCHIFF: And during the transition, were you aware of any other meetings that Mr. Kushner or others affiliated with the campaign or transition team were having with Ambassador Kislyak?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SCHIFF: On March 27th of last year, The New York Times reported that, in mid-December, Jared Kushner held a previously undisclosed meeting with Russian Bank Chairman Sergey Gorkov of the VEB bank. Were you aware of Mr. Kushner's meeting with Sergey Gorkov?

MS. HICKS: Not until after January 20th.

MR. SCHIFF: At this point, you're refusing to answer any question about what you learned thereafter?

MR. TROUT: Yes. Those were the instructions from the White House.

MR. SCHIFF: On April 3rd, 2016, The Washington Post reported that Erik Prince was involved in a secret meeting with a Russian close to Putin in the Seychelles on January 11th, 2017, organized by the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi. Were you aware of that meeting at any time prior to your joining the administration?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SCHIFF: Were you aware of any of Mike Flynn's conversations with the Russian Ambassador during the transition or prior to the transition?

MS. HICKS: Not prior to. During, I was made aware that he planned to speak with him, a preplanned conversation, and would offer condolences for the, I guess the Turkish Ambassador who had been killed.

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MR. TROUT: The Ambassador to Turkey.

MS. HICKS: Thank you, yes.

That's my only recollection. I've seen documents since then that detail sort of a thread, a conversation between rather a large group of folks about a response to an inquiry from David Ignatius about the nature of the call and the subjects that were discussed.

And I engaged in that conversation at one point, responding to General Flynn, who felt that the reporting about a discussion of sanctions was not accurate, and he outlined what had been discussed and asked if there was any way to fix the reporting. And I think I responded to that email saying, yes, tell the reporter, you know, what you actually discussed, which I guess somebody did. He had his own press folks. Monica Crowley was his I think communications director. And he had – she had an associate named Chris Byrne, I think, that fielded these types of media inquiries. And Sean Spicer and Jason Miller, they were all sort of included on that thread.

[REDACTED] One minute.

MS. HICKS: That was my response.

MR. SCHIFF: And just so that I can understand the dates of all of this, the conversation that you're referring to that was the subject of the David Ignatius article, when did that conversation take place between General Flynn and the Russian Ambassador?

MS. HICKS: I don't know when it actually took place, but December 28th or 29th, from what I recall, based on, you know, the mention of the condolence offering. And I can't recall if General Flynn said that to me or if KT said that to me, but I just remember somebody sort of mentioning that in passing. We were all sort

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of in and out of meetings and things at Mar-a-Lago. And then the David Ignatius exchange was, you know, sometime in very early January.

MR. SCHIFF: So the first that you learned that General Flynn was going to be in communication with the Russian Ambassador was when you learned that he would be making a condolence call over the death of the Russian Ambassador to Turkey?

MS. HICKS: No, that's not what I said. I said that he was going to offer condolences on a preplanned call. I don't recall other instances of General Flynn sharing with me plans to have meetings or discuss things with other Ambassadors. I've since seen an email about who would be contacted in the context of the U.N. vote, and there were a lot of countries listed: France, Great Britain. I believe Russia was among them. It didn't say, you know, call Russian Ambassador. So --

MR. SCHIFF: I want to just start at the very beginning. The first time you learned of any communication between General Flynn and the Russian Ambassador was when you learned that there was a preplanned call for General Flynn with the Russian Ambassador?

MS. HICKS: I don't -- I don't recall when I first learned of General Flynn communicating with the Russian Ambassador or any other ambassador in his role as the National Security Adviser for the President-elect. Obviously, there were a lot of incoming calls from foreign leaders in the days immediately following the election, and some of those were coordinated via embassies and ambassadors.

MR. SCHIFF: I'm going to make it easy.

MR. ROONEY: Adam, just to preserve the 15-minute --

MS. HICKS: I don't recall any -- certainly not before the end of the election, and I don't recall any other times when I heard of any meetings or calls or

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communications between the Ambassador and General Flynn.

I believe I received an email from somebody at the Embassy at the end of November, saying that they wished to get in touch with General Flynn. This is the same individual that had contacted me after the election, and I recall just forwarding the email along to General Flynn. But that wasn't the Ambassador, and I have no idea when he made contact or what he did with that email.

MR. ROONEY: I just want to preserve the 15-minute clock, and we'll yield back.

MR. SCHIFF: Thank you.

Okay. So I want to make sure that I'm following you correctly. The first then you learned of outreach by the Russians to General Flynn was in November, in the form of an email from someone who wanted to establish contact on behalf of the Russian Government with General Flynn?

MS. HICKS: That's my recollection. Yes, he was an individual from the Embassy. I don't know what his title was. And he wanted to make contact with General Flynn.

MR. SCHIFF: And how did that come to your attention?

MS. HICKS: It was emailed to me.

MR. SCHIFF: They emailed you directly or --

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: -- it was forwarded to you?

MS. HICKS: No, they emailed me directly.

MR. SCHIFF: And do you know why someone from the Russian -- was it someone from the Russian Embassy?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

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MR. SCHIFF: Do you know why they would reach out to you?

MS. HICKS: The night of the election, at about 4 o'clock in the morning, I got a phone call. I answered the phone call, and it was someone on the other end saying that they were from the Russian Embassy and that President Putin wanted to congratulate President-elect Trump, and if I could help coordinate that, what would be the best way to do that?

I couldn't understand him totally. That was sort of what I gathered from the conversation, though. But, given the time and the ask and my role, which had nothing to do with coordinating or communicating with foreign governments or their representatives, I asked that he send me an email so he could put his request in writing, I could understand who he was, and I could share that information with people that could properly vet it, and then follow up with that person.

And that's what he did. A couple minutes later, he sent me an email saying, we just spoke on the phone. We'd like to offer our congratulations to President-elect Trump. Please let me know when he is available. I've attached a congratulatory note from President Putin.

MR. SCHIFF: And that was the first person who — first Russian national who reached out to you to make contact with the President-elect or candidate Trump?

MS. HICKS: So I thought at the time that it was. Knowing now, in preparation for these lovely sessions, I've seen an email from that same individual from February of 2016, where he had emailed me, asking if I could be helpful in arranging an interview with candidate Trump and a Russian news outlet.

I replied to that email just saying, thanks, but no thanks. And so that is the same individual that reached out to me on election night. So he would have had

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my contact information from the signature of my email.

MR. SCHIFF: And was that Sergey Kuznetsov?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: So the first time you heard from Mr. Kuznetsov was in February 2016, when he was interested in an interview with the candidate with Russian --

MS. HICKS: In arranging an interview for a Russian outlet I think is what it was.

MR. SCHIFF: And then the next time that you had interaction with any Russian national seeking contact with the campaign was on election night, or were there any in between?

MS. HICKS: Early the following morning, I guess you would say, 4 a.m.

MR. SCHIFF: And that was also an email from the same person who reached out earlier, this time wanting to arrange for a congratulatory call from Putin?

MS. HICKS: That's right.

MR. SCHIFF: And what did you do with that inquiry?

MS. HICKS: I sent the inquiry to Jared Kushner, who had been sort of the primary contact for any foreign communications. He arranged the trip to Russia. He set up the conversation with Prime Minister Netanyahu during the U.N. week.

He was meeting or speaking to at least Dr. Kissinger pretty regularly and was sort of just managing the income of, you know, whatever foreign outreach there was and sort of diplomatically declining engagement, as far as I understood, because we were just focused on -- on the election and had no purpose for, you know, outside of Mexico, engaging in those.

MR. SCHIFF: When you say he set up a trip to Russia, what trip are you

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referring to?

MS. HICKS: Did I say Russia? I meant Mexico.

MR. SCHIFF: I heard Russia, but maybe I misheard.

MR. TROUT: It was Mexico. It was a trip to Mexico.

MS. HICKS: Sorry.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know whatever became of that that you referred to Jared Kushner? Did you have any further involvement in that at all?

MS. HICKS: I remember having a conversation with Jared about it the next day, like sort of laughing about how I had no idea who this was or if it was legitimate. And he said that he had reached out to someone, I don't know who, that said the name of the Russian Ambassador was different than the person that had reached out to us, so he didn't think it was legitimate. Obviously, this person is not purporting to be the Ambassador, so I'm not sure what got lost in translation there, but I remember that conversation.

And then the candidate started -- you know, throughout that day was taking and making or taking and returning phone calls to a lot of different foreign leaders, congratulatory calls, and I believe I shared the note that was attached with General Flynn and I was asked to respond and set up a time for a call.

MR. SCHIFF: And I'm sorry. Explain what you mean by that, the note that was attached.

MS. HICKS: There was an attachment to his email, I said, with a congratulatory note from -- from Putin, which I was hesitant to open. But somehow it got opened, and it was printed out for -- for the candidate -- or the President-elect.

MR. SCHIFF: So the email from Mr. Kuznetsov included an attachment from Putin?

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MS. HICKS: I think so, yeah. Or maybe it wasn't the original; maybe it was a followup. But one of the first email exchanges, there was an attachment with a note that basically said congratulations. I think it was put out publicly to the press.

MR. SCHIFF: And so the following day, you had a conversation with the President-elect about the outreach from Putin's office or from the Embassy or from this Russian?

MS. HICKS: Yeah, in the context of saying who he had spoken to. I believe he had spoken to the U.K., maybe Germany, and there were people coming on board from the transition team that were moving up from D.C. to Trump Tower to kind of manage all of this incoming, so it wouldn't fall on Rhona, who didn't know what the protocols were, or me, who obviously shouldn't have been involved.

And I sort of mentioned that somebody from the Russian Embassy had reached out about a congratulatory note or call from Putin as well. And he wanted to see the note, and I think I gave the email to General Flynn at that point or somebody else. And then he suggested that I respond to set up a time for the call.

MR. SCHIFF: So the President-elect asked you to set up the call?

MS. HICKS: He suggested I respond to start engaging on trying to schedule a call, yeah.

MR. SCHIFF: And how did you go about responding?

MS. HICKS: I don't remember. I'm sure you have the emails, but --

MR. SCHIFF: Actually, I wouldn't be sure we have the emails, so --

MS. HICKS: I think I just wrote back and said, you know, thanks for reaching out, thanks for the note, let us know what works for you in terms of the phone call.

MR. SCHIFF: And did the phone call get arranged?

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MS. HICKS: It did, yeah.

MR. SCHIFF: And did General Flynn play a role in arranging that?

MS. HICKS: I don't remember exactly who. I think there were some individuals: Megan Badasch, she works at the White House now, actually; and another individual, I think maybe Sean Lawler. I'm not totally sure, but I think they were the two people kind of managing the contacts and the State Department and all of the transition pieces of it, logging those calls, all of that, that were – at that time, they were brought in. This was a couple days later now when the call actually took place. But General Flynn was present for the call, I do remember that.

MR. SCHIFF: Were you present for the call?

MS. HICKS: I was present for parts of it. I was kind of in and out of his office, printing things and taking calls. But I -- I sort of remember coming in right at the end and sitting down at a table he has in the back of his office. And he was sort of wrapping up the call. And then I left before it actually finished and came back. And he said that he had had a good call. That's all I remember.

MR. SCHIFF: And who was present for the call?

MS. HICKS: General Flynn I recall being present. I believe either Megan or Sean was -- was there. I don't know if they were just there to sort of set it up, and then -- they weren't in the office when I came in, but I remember seeing them on the 26th floor.

So I didn't know what the protocol was, whether they set it up and listened from Rhona's office or they didn't actually listen, but they were there in case something went wrong. And then Ivanka Trump was there when I came in.

████████████████████ Four minutes.

MR. SCHIFF: And I'm sorry, Megan and Sean, what are their last names?

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MS. HICKS: Badasch and Lawler. I know Megan was sort of the point person for foreign contacts on the transition. She works at the NSC now at the White House. I can't totally recall that it was definitely Sean Lawler that was involved in these foreign calls and this specific one, but I definitely remember forwarding some of these correspondence to Megan for logs and things like that.

MR. SCHIFF: And what do you recall of the conversation while you were in the room?

MS. HICKS: Like thanks, good-bye. I didn't hear anything interesting or of substance. It was pleasantries.

MR. SCHIFF: And anything more you can recall about what the President had to say about it after the call was over?

MS. HICKS: Just that it was a good call.

MR. SCHIFF: Any of the other people present have any commentary on the call?

MS. HICKS: Not that I remember.

MR. SCHIFF: And that would have been a few days after the election?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: Was the next communication involving Russia that you were part of when General Flynn indicated in your presence that he had a prearranged call with the Russian Ambassador?

MS. HICKS: I said before that in early -- sorry, not early, but December, around December 20th, 21st, something around there, there was correspondence about a U.N. vote that I was included on, but I wasn't engaged in any of those conversations. I never spoke to anybody about that. Frankly, I didn't even know what it was about.

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I was a little bit, you know, checked out at that point after 2 years of campaigning. I was enjoying the holiday with my family or trying to get home to do that. I don't recall engaging in any conversations about the U.N. vote, but I guess since I've seen documents noting that I was cc'd on an email, that would be something. But yes, the next time I heard something or engaged was December 28th or 29th.

MR. SCHIFF: So between --

[Discussion off the record.]

MS. HICKS: Oh, yeah, yeah. Thank you. Thank you.

Sometime in the days leading up to Christmas, I can't remember the date, but I got another email from the Russian Embassy with an attachment with Christmas greetings from Putin for the President-elect and then a separate one for Barron, the President's son, from, I don't know, Russian children or -- it was like something associated that was meant for Barron. And I shared those with Megan and probably KT or General Flynn. And the Christmas card from Putin or the Christmas note was put out to the press.

MR. SCHIFF: And those were sent to you by the same Kuznetsov who --

MS. HICKS: Yeah.

MR. SCHIFF: -- earlier communicated with you?

MS. HICKS: I think so, yeah.

MR. SCHIFF: So those would have taken -- you would have received those emails before the holidays?

██████████ One minute.

MS. HICKS: Yes. I think I -- I think we -- like December 20th probably about. I remember there was a conversation, because the letter was dated

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December 15th, and we were putting it out obviously several days later.

MR. SCHIFF: So the next communication that you've mentioned -- it sounds like you received these, you were copied on these emails during the holidays -- was a discussion of the U.N. vote on Israel?

MS. HICKS: Yeah. I think the date on that was -- I can't be sure, but I just don't remember ever speaking to anybody about it or overhearing any discussions about it. So I have to imagine that I was at this point sort of elsewhere. I've never spoke to or heard anything about it.

MR. SCHIFF: These were emails which you bring up now because they involved discussions with the Russian Ambassador over U.N. sanctions -- or over, I'm sorry, not U.N. sanctions, but over U.N. resolutions vis-à-vis Israel?

MS. HICKS: I don't know what -- I don't know what the specifics were. I just recall in preparation for these interviews seeing an email that I was cc'd on that said outreach for the U.N. vote should include, you know, the following countries, or something to that effect, and Russia was one of the countries listed amongst France, U.K., and others.

MR. SCHIFF: Now, as I was mentioning to your counsel, you can't assume that we have all of this production. We don't have all of it.

So what can you tell us, to the best of your recollection, about the emails that you were copied on that dealt with the U.N. resolution and involved Russia?

MS. HICKS: That's the only email I can recall, and I don't remember. I think it was from General Flynn to a group, saying that, you know, this was sort of the planned outreach. But, again, I didn't know what that meant at the time, and I wasn't involved in it, so it was probably something I just skimmed over, didn't --

MR. ROONEY: Adam, we yield, yield back.

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MR. SCHIFF: I'm sorry?

MR. ROONEY: We're yielding. Your time is up.

MR. SCHIFF: Okay. Thank you.

MR. KING: When I was gone, did I miss anything? Any new questions?

MR. ROONEY: You missed everything.

MR. TROUT: Want us to go back over everything?

MR. ROONEY: Will the court reporter read back everything, please?

MR. KING: Groundhog Day.

MR. SCHIFF: Actually, counsel said that they would talk about the transition as long as you weren't in the room.

MR. KING: The story of my life.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you recall who else was copied on the email? Was KT McFarland copied on the email?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall.

MR. SCHIFF: But it was an outreach plan that included the Russian Ambassador on the issue of U.N. resolutions vis-à-vis Israel?

MS. HICKS: No, it wasn't -- I don't think it specified Russian Ambassador. It was just countries we're going to reach out to. I mean, take from that what you will. But I recall a list of countries that were being reached out to or that planned outreach was being considered or discussed. I don't know anything else about it. I'm sorry.

MR. SCHIFF: But Russia was one of those countries?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And was there any discussion in these emails about the necessity of keeping it quiet?

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MS. HICKS: I don't recall anything else about the email. But, obviously, if you're emailing, you know, several people -- if it was a broad enough group that I'm included on a discussion about U.N. votes, I don't think you're trying to keep it secret, but --

MR. SCHIFF: You wouldn't leak it, would you?

MS. HICKS: I would never, but still I -- it would not fall under my sort of scope of work, I would say.

MR. SCHIFF: So this is around the holidays. At what point then do you learn of a prearranged call with the Russian Ambassador?

MS. HICKS: Like I said, it was something I remember hearing in passing. I can't remember if it was from General Flynn directly or KT. There was sort of like a hustle and bustle of people in and out at Mar-a-Lago, but somebody said that there was a preplanned call with the Ambassador where they would offer condolences.

MR. SCHIFF: And were you at Mar-a-Lago at the time?

MS. HICKS: I was, yeah.

MR. SCHIFF: And when the subject came up of the preplanned call, condolence call, was there discussion of what else might be raised at the same time?

MS. HICKS: I didn't engage in any conversation. Like I said, it was a comment made in passing to me or to others in my presence. Again, memory is very hazy. I just don't recall speaking to anybody about it. And I -- even if somebody said it directly to me, I wouldn't -- my response wouldn't be to say, what else are you going to discuss? I -- that falls so far outside my scope of work, I wouldn't even know where to ask or to take an interest in that. It just -- it wouldn't be something that I would do.

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MR. SCHIFF: Well, you remember it being regarding a preplanned call and ■ condolence over the death of the Russian Ambassador to Turkey. That's a specific recollection. Anything else about the conversation you recall?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SCHIFF: And when was the next you learned what actually took place during that call?

MS. HICKS: Like I said, there was ■ thread of emails that I was looped into at some point about -- or, excuse me, David Ignatius reached out to me initially about what was discussed on the call. I forwarded the email to Monica Crowley, who was his -- General Flynn's communications director, and Chris Byrne, who was her sort of associate fielding press inquiries. I believe I also cc'd Jason Miller and Sean Spicer. I can't recall who else I cc'd. Maybe KT McFarland, just saying like "see below," essentially. And expecting Monica or Chris or somebody to respond accordingly.

MR. SCHIFF: And did you just receive an email from David Ignatius, or did you speak with him on the phone as well?

MS. HICKS: No, I didn't speak with David Ignatius.

MR. SCHIFF: And what did David Ignatius ask?

MS. HICKS: I'm sure somebody has the email, but it said something like, "We have reporting that says General Flynn might have discussed sanctions in his December phone call with the Russian Ambassador; would you like to respond," or something to that effect.

MR. SCHIFF: And when did you get this inquiry from David Ignatius? Do you recall what date it was?

MS. HICKS: I think I got it early January. I don't recall the date. Fourth,

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January 4th, 3rd or 4th.

MR. SCHIFF: So you forwarded it on to these others, and then what did you hear next?

MS. HICKS: I don't remember exactly. I think there was a response from General Flynn directing KT or Monica to call or to tell Ignatius, no, these were the four things that we talked about. And then the next thing I remember was seeing David Ignatius on TV in the morning. I can't remember what the time lapse was from when we got the inquiry and when he was on TV talking about his reporting, but saying that, you know, he had reporting that suggested that there were sanctions discussed and that there hadn't been a response from the Trump team, which is generally frowned upon in -- as a practice of not responding to press inquiries by Mr. Trump.

So I -- just as I was going to email the group again to say that, I had an email from Flynn to the group saying that this is inaccurate, what they're reporting; how can we fix this? And I think I wrote back, "You can start by responding to David Ignatius," which nobody had done, apparently. And then I guess KT or Monica, somebody worked with David Ignatius, but I wasn't involved in that.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you recall what -- and if you can look for whether we have the email from David Ignatius. Do you recall what specifically David Ignatius asked? Did he ask, were the subject of sanctions discussed during the call? Was that one of Ignatius' questions?

MS. HICKS: You already asked that, what he asked me, what he -- and I said I think it was suggesting that potentially sanctions were discussed on the call. I don't know what the email says exactly. You'd have to pull up the email. But the response from Flynn was outlining that that was not discussed and outlining the four

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things that were discussed.

MR. SCHIFF: And what were the four things that he said were discussed?

MS. HICKS: You know, I don't want to say without looking at the email, but definitely condolences for the death of the Ambassador. I think something about areas of cooperation in defeating ISIS. Those are the only two I remember for sure. Maybe something with Syria. I don't -- I don't remember exactly.

MR. SCHIFF: But in the correspondence from General Flynn, he said that he did not discuss the sanctions, and these were the four things he did discuss.

MS. HICKS: Yeah. And I'm sure you could pull up also The Washington Post story where somebody responded with those four things on behalf of General Flynn. So you don't even need the email; you can pull up his story.

MR. SCHIFF: Well, we do actually need the email, but in any event -- and you shouldn't presume that we have everything that was provided to special counsel or anyone else.

So Flynn sends this email back with the four things he represents that he did discuss, and then he emails you directly or you're part of the group email asking what can be done to correct the record?

MS. HICKS: The group. He said, you know: The story is being reported and it's not accurate; what can be done?

And my response was sort of like: Well, if these are the four things you discussed, you should tell the reporter that instead of just not responding.

MR. SCHIFF: Now, you didn't deal directly after that point with David Ignatius?

MS. HICKS: Not on that story, no.

MR. SCHIFF: And do you know who did respond to him?

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MS. HICKS: I don't, but my guess is Monica or Chris or KT.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know whether Flynn discussed it directly with David Ignatius?

MS. HICKS: I don't. I know he's spoken to him, to David. I remember him saying something about speaking to him at a later date, right around the inauguration. He mentioned that he wanted to bring in a couple of reporters to talk to them about what he was going to be doing with the national security team and their areas of focus. But I don't know that that ever happened or who was responsible for arranging that.

MR. SCHIFF: So General Flynn mentioned that he wanted to bring in some reporters that cover national security matters, but do you know whether he ever talked directly to Ignatius about that call to the Russian Ambassador?

MS. HICKS: I don't.

MR. SCHIFF: And what communications were you part of next concerning General Flynn and his conversation with the Russian Ambassador, or what communications, either orally or in writing, were you a part of after that?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall. I don't recall anything prior to the inauguration about that, that matter, but --

MR. SCHIFF: So Flynn never asked you personally to weigh in with the press or anyone else on the subject of that call?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SCHIFF: And were you present during the transition for any discussions that General Flynn had with others in the transition team about his conversations with Kislyak?

MS. HICKS: No.

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MR. SCHIFF: So you never heard General Flynn discuss with, for example, the Vice President whether he had discussed sanctions with the Russian Ambassador?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SCHIFF: The Vice President went on television to say that sanctions were not discussed. Was that during the transition as well, I think?

MS. HICKS: I think so.

MR. SCHIFF: And were you privy to any conversation within the transition team or among campaign people prior to that TV appearance or after that TV appearance about what the Vice President had represented?

MS. HICKS: Not prior to. And I don't recall anything specific or anything I could say with clarity about afterwards that isn't conflated with, you know, media reporting. But I don't recall any conversations I had before the inauguration.

MR. SCHIFF: But the David Ignatius piece came out before the inauguration, right?

MS. HICKS: Uh-huh.

MR. SCHIFF: So it was already being publicly reported that what General Flynn had told you and others about the call wasn't true. That was at least being publicly reported, correct?

MS. HICKS: Yes. That was what David Ignatius' sources were saying. And General Flynn was saying that it wasn't accurate and outlined what he said he did discuss.

MR. SCHIFF: And during the transition, were you a part of any other --

MS. HICKS: Also, just, sorry, to offer this. You know, in hindsight, might raise a flag on some of this stuff, but at the time, I wasn't thinking to myself like, wait

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■ minute, if he discussed sanctions, that's a violation of the Logan Act and we've got ■ problem here. And I didn't -- there wasn't any consequence even if what he was outlining as what took place -- I didn't see any issue with David Ignatius' reporting when I was first seeing these threads.

Do you understand what I'm saying? It didn't occur to me that there would be an issue with that. That's just not something that I would know as a, you know, 28-year-old real estate PR girl that got pulled into a Presidential campaign and was now following a thread of emails with the new National Security Adviser. These are not normal circumstances.

So I wouldn't have any way of knowing that that wasn't appropriate. Certainly followed the reporting afterwards. But just so we're clear about my engagement or what I said or what I didn't say, I wouldn't have known that that was problematic. Obviously, not telling the truth, problematic. I was being given his version of events, which he was very, very definitive about, both in writing and my understanding is in conversations with others. So --

MR. SCHIFF: And what's your -- what's the basis of your understanding about his conversation with others?

MS. HICKS: That would be after the inauguration.

MR. SCHIFF: During the transition, were others in the White House raising the question of whether General Flynn was being truthful about this?

MS. HICKS: I'm sorry; can you repeat the question?

MR. SCHIFF: During the transition and after the Ignatius piece came out, were people in the transition or campaign asking questions about whether General Flynn was being truthful?

MS. HICKS: Not to my knowledge.

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MR. SCHIFF: So you weren't privy to any conversations of that nature where people were asking whether General Flynn was being truthful in his denials?

MS. HICKS: Right.

MR. SCHIFF: So you respond to this email by saying: Well, somebody ought to engage David Ignatius. You weren't the person to engage him. Was this before the article? This must have been after the article came out where he said there was no comment.

MS. HICKS: That's right.

MR. SCHIFF: So was the design of the further engagement to seek a correction or hope for better coverage the next time he wrote, or what was the --

MS. HICKS: The -- my response saying somebody should engage was in -- it was a response to General Flynn saying: This is not accurate; can someone -- can we fix this?

And the answer to that is: No, unless you tell the reporter your version of events.

So that was my advice.

MR. SCHIFF: And what else were you privy to on this issue during the transition?

MS. HICKS: I've told you everything I know.

MR. SCHIFF: So, at that point, that was the last you heard or had anything to do with the Kislyak discussions with the Russian Ambassador?

MS. HICKS: Correct.

MR. SCHIFF: When Sally Yates came to the White House to brief White House counsel and issue whatever warning Sally Yates gave the administration, did you become aware of that at the time?

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MS. HICKS: That's after the inauguration.

MR. SCHIFF: I guess that is after -- well --

MS. HICKS: It's on January 26.

MR. SCHIFF: I guess there was a briefing that she gave during the transition, but you were not privy to that?

MS. HICKS: It's the first I'm hearing of it.

MR. SCHIFF: Apart from these contacts involving General Flynn and Ambassador Kislyak, are you aware of any other meetings, communications, or discussions that General Flynn had with Ambassador Kislyak?

MS. HICKS: No, not that I recall. I don't believe so.

MR. SCHIFF: And were you aware of -- and we got into a bit of this during the campaign. I don't know that I've asked you about this during the transition. But were you aware of any meetings that Jared Kushner had or any conversations Jared Kushner had with Ambassador Kislyak during the transition?

MS. HICKS: Not -- I told you when I learned of it. It was after the inauguration.

MR. SCHIFF: Yield to Mr. Swalwell.

MR. SWALWELL: Thank you.

Ms. Hicks, when you mentioned earlier that, during the transition, Mr. Flynn asked you to pass along something that you knew to be false and he wanted you to pass it along to be true, are you referring to his interaction with the Russian Ambassador that we've just gone through, or is there anything else?

MS. HICKS: I'm sorry, can you repeat the question?

MR. SWALWELL: I had asked you if Mr. Flynn ever asked you to lie for him. You said: Not during the campaign.

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Then I asked you if you were talking about the transition, and you said yes.

MS. HICKS: Yes. So, I mean, obviously, I didn't know that it was a lie at the time, but I think, based on the reporting that we've seen since then, it would appear that he was not being truthful in his written responses. Remember, I never had a conversation with him about any of this. It's all in writing, and it's his version of events. I'm merely suggesting that, if he would like that version of events to be captured in the story, instead of telling the group, he should tell the reporter.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you ever tell Mr. Trump about Mr. Ignatius' inquiry to you?

MS. HICKS: I don't remember having any conversations with him.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you ever talk to Mr. Trump at all before the inauguration about questions concerning General Flynn and the Russian Ambassador?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall.

MR. SWALWELL: Well, you've recalled a lot of details today about a lot of people you talked to in this period. The most important person that you talked to during this period, you would agree, would be President-elect Trump. Is that right?

MS. HICKS: That's right.

MR. SWALWELL: And your testimony now is that you don't recall if you talked to him about General Flynn and the Russian Ambassador?

MR. TROUT: I don't think that was her testimony.

MR. SWALWELL: She said: I don't recall.

MR. TROUT: I think what she meant was that, if it happened, she doesn't recall it. But she was not suggesting that she had no recall. I think what she was indicating is she doesn't think this happened, but --

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MR. SWALWELL: Well, Ms. Hicks, would you agree that a conversation with President-elect Trump during the transition about General Flynn and the Russian Ambassador is probably something you'd recall?

MS. HICKS: I think a conversation with the President-elect about his National Security Adviser having conversations with other foreign representatives would not be a red flag in my mind prior to reporting about sanctions and the consequences of discussing sanctions.

And you have to kind of remember when this was all playing out, it's very different than it looks a year after the fact.

MR. SWALWELL: Well, you would agree, at the time, there were already questions, even prior to election day, about President Trump and Russia?

MS. HICKS: Which the campaign and the people that were actually participants of or played a role in the campaign thought were sort of ridiculous.

MR. SWALWELL: I'm not asking whether you think they're ridiculous. I'm just asking you if you agree that it was a conversation.

MS. HICKS: What I'm saying is we – the members of the campaign that actually knew what took place and who participated and who didn't and what went on and what didn't, we sort of looked at that narrative as something that was being spun up.

Not to say that Russia's interference wasn't something to be taken seriously, but that our involvement in that was sort of laughable, given that we were like the Forrest Gump of campaigns. We couldn't spell the address to our Iowa field office right, and yet we colluded with Vladimir Putin to steal the election. It was sort of a hilarious narrative to us.

██████████ Five minutes.

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MR. SWALWELL: Did you ever talk to Donald Trump during the transition about General Flynn and the Russian Ambassador?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall any conversation.

MR. SWALWELL: And I just want to be clear. By saying you don't recall, you are testifying that it is possible, you just don't recall?

MS. HICKS: That is correct.

MR. SWALWELL: Did President-elect Trump --

MS. HICKS: But I think you spoke to how forthcoming I've been on other subjects and topics and knowledgeable about dates and other events, so --

MR. SWALWELL: Your memory is pretty good.

MS. HICKS: -- it's logical that, if it happened, I would probably remember it. It's certainly possible.

MR. SWALWELL: Ms. Hicks, did President-elect Trump ever express any views about how the incoming administration should react to President Obama's sanctions on Russia? And I'm just talking about the transition period.

MR. TROUT: Understand this is not something that we have necessarily cleared with the White House, so let me confer briefly.

[Discussion off the record.]

MR. TROUT: Can we get the question again?

MR. SWALWELL: Did candidate Trump or did President-elect Trump ever react to President Obama's sanctions on Russia? They were issued I believe December 28.

MS. HICKS: Not that I recall. I do recall a tweet that I was not involved in, but seeing it on the news at some point about Russia not immediately responding to the response to the election. But I wasn't involved or I never discussed that tweet

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prior to it being publicly put out.

MR. SWALWELL: You mentioned a Christmas card from children from Russia that was sent to you. The card was actually children from Crimea. Is that right?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall the specifics of it. I don't — I didn't read it.

MR. SWALWELL: Do you consider Crimea to be a part of Russia?

MS. HICKS: I honestly have no idea.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you tell Mr. Trump about the card from the children of Crimea?

MS. HICKS: Again, I didn't — I don't recall reading the card or opening it, so I don't think that I would have been saying what it was or what it wasn't.

MR. SWALWELL: Do you understand the significance, I guess, of a card from Crimea?

MS. HICKS: Yeah, that it's Russian kids. No, I don't know the significance. It was some random email that I passed along to somebody.

██████████ One minute.

MS. HICKS: I didn't read it.

MR. SWALWELL: Who did you pass it along to?

MS. HICKS: It looks like I passed it along to the First Lady.

MR. SWALWELL: On September 17th, 2015, Katie Tur emailed you about Trump wanting to meet with Putin, and she asked about a Michael Cohen comment.

MS. HICKS: I'm sorry; what's the date?

MR. SWALWELL: I'm showing you the email. It's September 17, 2015.

Do you recall Katie Tur writing you and asking you about Michael Cohen stating that Mr. Trump and Mr. Putin will be meeting at the United Nations General Assembly?

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MS. HICKS: I don't recall Katie Tur emailing me, but I recall Jeremy Diamond from CNN and others. I mean, you know, if you get one, you get a hundred.

MR. SWALWELL: And what is redacted there?

I just was finishing the question.

What is redacted in that email? What can't we see?

MR. TROUT: Congressman, I don't know why it's redacted, but I don't think it ought to be Ms. Hicks to tell us what's redacted.

MR. SWALWELL: I yield back.

MR. KING: Ms. Hicks, sorry, I had to leave for about a half hour.

Did David Ignatius tell you or anyone else in the transition team where he got the information regarding the wiretapped call with General Flynn?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. KING: Do you recall anyone in the White House during the transition team or the White House itself asking a question of how a wiretap involving an American citizen was probably illegally disclosed by someone to a reporter?

MS. HICKS: Not before the inauguration.

MR. KING: How about after? You can't answer.

Geez, I wish you didn't have that now.

So that never came up as to how this information got out there?

MS. HICKS: Not in any conversation that I was a part of.

MR. KING: Right. Or about it being illegal to do, or improper?

MS. HICKS: Prior to the inauguration. I think the first conversation about or the first allusion to that would have been January 19th, the day before the inauguration. There was a New York Times story that said that Trump campaign

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associates had been caught up in wiretaps or had been wiretapped.

I don't recall the specifics of that story. I just remember – and I don't recall reading it at the time. I remember getting the inquiry the night before and forwarding it to Reince Priebus and maybe Steve Bannon, does anyone know anything about this? And I don't know who responded to the reporter. I did not, to my knowledge. Maybe I did, saying that we don't know anything about this. And then it sort of got lost in the shuffle of inauguration, but it was -- that story was a topic of conversation after.

MR. KING: Okay. So, prior to 12 noon on January 20th, it was not a topic of discussion among the transition team?

MS. HICKS: No. Like I said, I got an inquiry. I forwarded it. But I wasn't speaking about it with people.

MR. KING: Okay. Thank you very much.

MR. CONAWAY: Ms. Hicks, thank you. Trey Gowdy earlier mentioned three words: conspiracy, coordination, and collusion during the campaign. I'd like to just close the loop for the transition period.

Do you have any information, whether it's hearsay or not, any comments to us about collusion, coordination, and conspiracy between the Trump transition team and anybody related to Russia, anybody that was acting on behalf of Russia?

MS. HICKS: No. I'm not even sure what that would mean.

MR. CONAWAY: But you know what conspiracy would be?

MS. HICKS: Yes, but I guess the point of colluding would be to win the election or --

MR. CONAWAY: I just want to close the loop.

MS. HICKS: No.

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MR. CONAWAY: All right. Thank you.

Mr. Schiff, 15.

MR. SCHIFF: Well, Ms. Hicks, would you consider someone who was secretly meeting with the Russians and conspiring to subvert the bipartisan policy of the United States, would you consider that conspiracy, and then lying about it?

MR. TROUT: Don't answer that.

MR. SCHIFF: You've already answered a question about whether you ever saw any evidence of conspiracy or coordination or collusion.

MS. HICKS: During the transition. I didn't know about this meeting until after January 20th so --

MR. SCHIFF: But you do know about it now, and you've been asked the question, and you've said no, and I'm asking you --

MS. HICKS: But his question was specific to the transition.

MR. SCHIFF: Well, I'm talking about the transition too. If someone during the transition was secretly meeting with the Russians and conspiring to affect U.S. policy against the bipartisan policy of the United States at the time and then lying about it, would you consider that to be evidence of conspiracy, coordination, or collusion with the Russians?

MS. HICKS: I'm not going to answer a hypothetical question.

MR. SCHIFF: That actually is not a hypothetical.

MR. KING: Adam, could I interject and just ask you a question, if you will? After she finishes, I'd like to just ask you a question.

MS. HICKS: It's a question -- I don't know why I'm being asked questions about things I had no knowledge of and wasn't involved in and weren't secret. They were taking place in Trump Tower, the most public building in the world. But

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I don't -- I didn't know about them until a month after the fact. So -- and I wasn't present, so I don't know what took place. Conspiracy, as you say, I wouldn't be able to say.

MR. KING: Adam, the point I was making is your question contains the premise, assumes the premise that there was collusion or conspiracy. All General Flynn has pleaded guilty to is his conversation. There's no accusation, no indictment at all of any collusion or conspiracy involving General Flynn.

MR. SCHIFF: Mr. King, what I'm saying --

MR. KING: So how can she have information about something when there was no evidence that it occurred?

MR. SCHIFF: What I'm saying is I think there is little value in asking a witness to give a summary conclusion about whether they've seen evidence of conspiracy or collusion or coordination. What matters are the specifics, and the specifics that she has learned about actually do indicate evidence of all three. That's my point.

MR. KING: Well, the thing is he's not been charged with that. After a thorough investigation, there is no evidence at all of collusion or conspiracy. All he was charged with was his accounts of the conservation.

MR. SCHIFF: Mr. King, she isn't being asked what people have been charged with. She's asking whether she saw any evidence of conspiracy, collusion, or coordination.

MR. KING: And that is not evidence of conspiracy or collusion.

MR. SCHIFF: Well, okay.

MR. TROUT: I think we can move on.

MR. SCHIFF: I agree. I agree.

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Let me show you an exhibit and see if this is one of the emails that you were referring to earlier.

What you have before you is a document Bates stamped NHPSCI and ending in 114. It is an email chain dated December 30th, in which it appears that an email has been forwarded from General Flynn entitled "Russian AMBO phone call."

Have you seen this email before?

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[5:00 p.m.]

MS. HICKS: I have seen the email before. I can't recall in what setting it was shown to me.

MR. CONAWAY: Your mike.

MS. HICKS: I have seen the email before. I can't recall in what setting it was shown to me.

MR. SCHIFF: Did you see it in real time? Did you see it when this email was circulated on or about December 30th?

MS. HICKS: No, I'm sorry.

MR. TROUT: This would have been something that she had seen since the inauguration. She's not going to talk about it, the circumstance.

MR. SCHIFF: Well, my question was, did you see it on about December 30th. So your answer is no?

MS. HICKS: That's correct.

MR. SCHIFF: You referred earlier to an email in which General Flynn set out for items that were discussed with the Russian Ambassador, so that I take it that is not this email.

MS. HICKS: It is not.

MR. SCHIFF: Is this the same phone call that he's referencing? Can you tell?

MS. HICKS: I -- I can't be certain, but I imagine it's the same phone call.

MR. SCHIFF: And why do you imagine that's the case?

MS. HICKS: Just given the timing, but I can't be certain. It also says that he took a call. The call we had been previously discussing was planned in advance. I don't know if there's a difference. So that would be a question for

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General Flynn.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know whether the preplanned call was one that the Russian Ambassador was going to place or he was going to place?

MS. HICKS: I don't know.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know how many calls that General Flynn made or took to the Russian Ambassador during the transition?

MS. HICKS: I don't.

MR. SCHIFF: There are three talking points in this email that Flynn represents were the Ambassador's talking points: one dealing with significant reservations about the current administration's position on the Middle East; another about a meeting in Kazakhstan; and the third is about Putin inviting "T" -- I assume that's the President-elect -- for a secure video conference on the 1st of January. How closely do these three track the email that you referred to?

MS. HICKS: Again, I said I couldn't say with certainty beyond the condolences for the Ambassador. And I speculated that one of the other topics was coordination -- areas of coordination defeating ISIS, potentially something about Syria which might correlate to the piece here about a conference, but I don't recall specifically.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you remember there being any mention of Kazakhstan?

MS. HICKS: I don't.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you remember being part of any discussion about whether the Trump transition team should send a delegation to Kazakhstan?

MS. HICKS: I don't.

MR. SCHIFF: And what about Putin's invitation for a secure video conference on January 21st? Were you aware of that proposal during the

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transition?

MS. HICKS: Not prior to January 20th, that I recall.

MR. SCHIFF: I have an email, which we can get copies of if you need, from Sergey Kuznetsov to you, dated January 18th. It says: Dear Hope, some time ago, Ambassador Kislyak conveyed to Mr. Flynn our proposal that organized a video call between Presidents Trump and Putin right after the inauguration. Can you please update me if that is possible in the first days after the inauguration? If so, when would be most convenient for President Trump? This is for our scheduling sake. I would appreciate it if you get back to me with any information, yes, no, still considering, today, if possible.

Was this the email you were referring to earlier when you said that he had reached out to you about extending congratulations?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SCHIFF: So there is a second email on a slightly different topic?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: This email is dated a few weeks after -- I guess 3 weeks after the December 30th email. Did you -- were you made aware of the request around December 30th when General Flynn conveyed that request from the Ambassador or was hearing about this from Mr. Kuznetsov the first time you learned of that request?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall hearing about it after December 30th. So I imagine this was the first time I heard about it.

MR. TROUT: You're referring to January 18?

MS. HICKS: Uh-huh.

MR. SCHIFF: So the first that you can recall the request for a video

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conference between Putin and Trump would have been the email you received on January 18th?

MS. HICKS: Well, I didn't recall it. So – but I'm seeing it now, so yes.

[REDACTED] Five minutes.

MR. SCHIFF: And does seeing it refresh your recollection? Do you now recall receiving the email?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know what you did as a result of this? Do you know whether you took any action to facilitate the call or pass this on to someone else to deal with?

MS. HICKS: I didn't take any action to facilitate the call myself. So I imagine I forwarded it to somebody else who would be more appropriate.

MR. SCHIFF: [REDACTED]

Russian Ambassador contacted him on December 28th. The following day, on December 29th, Flynn called a senior official with the Presidential transition team who was with other senior members of the Presidential transition team at Mar-a-Lago in Palm Beach, Florida, to discuss what, if anything, to communicate to the Russian Ambassador about the U.S. sanctions. On that call, Flynn and the Presidential transition official discussed the U.S. sanctions, including the potential impact of the sanctions on the upcoming administration's foreign policy goals.

The Presidential transition official and Flynn also discussed that members of Presidential transition team at Mar-a-Lago did not want Russia to escalate the situation. Immediately after his conversation with this Presidential transition official, Flynn called the Russian Ambassador and requested that Russia not escalate the situation, only respond to the U.S. sanctions in a reciprocal manner.

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Shortly after his call with the Russian Ambassador, Flynn spoke with a Presidential transition official to report on the substance his call with the Russian Ambassador, including their discussion of U.S. sanctions.

Was this the time at which you indicated you were at Mar-a-Lago?

MS. HICKS: I was present at Mar-a-Lago on that date, yeah.

MR. SCHIFF: Who else from the Presidential transition team was there?

MS. HICKS: I can only base that off of my memory of dinner the night of the 29th. I remember Sean Spicer was present. I think KT was there earlier in the day. Katie Walsh maybe. And I just don't remember. There were -- so the reason I have trouble remembering specifically is we were at Mar-a-Lago I think December 18th to 21st, and then some people departed for the holidays. And then I returned on the 28th and 29th, departing on the 30th. So there's like two groups of transition officials that were sort of in and out, and a lot of overlap. And I have trouble recalling which dates and which groups, to be totally honest. But I do remember Sean Spicer being at dinner that evening. I think, on the 28th or 29th, I had lunch with Kellyanne Conway. I remember being in a -- there's like a workspace for staff, and I remember seeing Katie Walsh and KT. That's kind of it.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know who the Presidential transition official was that General Flynn describes in his statement of the offense that he was discussing the Russian sanctions with?

MS. HICKS: I don't know.

MR. SCHIFF: Were you present for any conversation General Flynn had with a transition official about his call with a Russian Ambassador?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SCHIFF: Did you speak with General Flynn that day or at all during

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your trip to Mar-a-Lago?

MS. HICKS: I did during my trip. It sounds like he wasn't there on site on the 29th if he was receiving calls from people.

MR. SCHIFF: Correct.

MS. HICKS: So I wouldn't have spoken to him that day.

MR. SCHIFF: So you didn't speak with him by phone that day?

MR. TROUT: Speak up.

MR. SCHIFF: I'm sorry?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SCHIFF: Are you aware of which members of the transition team spoke with Flynn that day?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know if KT McFarland spoke with him that day?

MS. HICKS: I imagine she did. I don't know.

MR. SCHIFF: Why do you imagine that she did?

MS. HICKS: Because they were -- she was his deputy.

██████████ One minute.

MR. SCHIFF: Is it -- is there anyone else the senior transition or the Presidential transition official could have been other than KT McFarland?

MS. HICKS: I don't know the answer to that.

MR. SCHIFF: Well, given what you do know about the responsibilities of those who were present, if General Flynn was going to do a debrief of his conversation with the Russian Ambassador, who would he have it with?

MS. HICKS: I mean, there are always possibilities. I just wasn't involved so I don't know.

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MR. SCHIFF: The emails -- the email that General Flynn sent in which he stated the Ignatius piece was inaccurate. Did that go to KT McFarland?

MS. HICKS: I believe it did, yeah.

MR. SCHIFF: So that, if KT McFarland was the person he was talking with about the sanctions, debriefing about the sanctions, KT McFarland would have known that General Flynn was misrepresenting the conversation to all those on the email chain, correct?

MS. HICKS: That's your assumption. I don't know what was said in any conversations between General Flynn and KT McFarland outside of the email chain that I was a part of and General Flynn's description of what took place on the call.

MR. CONAWAY: We're going to break. We have got four that will last until 6. Do you have a sense of how much more you guys are going to go? We're out on this side.

MR. SCHIFF: I don't. You know, I don't know that we have all that much more on the transition, although Eric has questions I'm sure. And then I just need to go back and sort of mop up the areas that we jumped over during the campaign.

MR. CONAWAY: All right. We'll keep the questions until the count gets to 150 votes. You have to vote, and then we will break and come back. So let's keep going. You have another 15 minutes.

MR. SCHIFF: All right. Thank you.

Well, if any of the people on that email that you received from General Flynn denying that he discussed sanctions were that Presidential transition official, none of them spoke up about it that you're aware of?

MS. HICKS: They didn't do so via the email chain that I was party to.

MR. SCHIFF: And they didn't -- no one came forward to you during the

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transition to tell you that what Mike Flynn had said was not true?

MS. HICKS: That's correct.

MR. SCHIFF: Let me show you another document, if I could.

Do you recall if Ivanka Trump or Jared Kushner were at Mar-a-Lago that weekend?

MS. HICKS: I don't believe they were. And I left on the morning of the 30th.

MR. SCHIFF: And how about Steve Bannon?

MS. HICKS: Actually, I -- I don't know about Steve.

MR. SCHIFF: So this is an email, dated December 30th, from KT McFarland. I believe that you're one of the recipients of the email.

MS. HICKS: Uh-huh.

MR. SCHIFF: The subject is: Making sure you saw these tweets, WikiLeaks, from Dmitry Medvedev. FYI, note Medvedev response to Obama sanctions VIA. This plus Putin response to not match Obama tit for tat are signals they want a new relationship starting January 20. They are sending us a signal. DJT response yesterday was absolutely perfect. Russia is key to unlocking Iran, China, Syria.

Do you recall this email?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know whether you took any response to receiving it?

MS. HICKS: No. I don't believe I did.

MR. SCHIFF: According to General Flynn's statement of the offense on December 31st, Ambassador Kislyak called Flynn and informed him that Russia had chosen not to retaliate in response to Flynn's request. After his phone call with

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the Russian Ambassador, Flynn spoke with senior members, plural, of the Presidential transition team about Flynn's conversations with the Russian Ambassador regarding the U.S. sanctions and Russia's decision not to escalate.

Where were you on December 31st?

MS. HICKS: I was in Connecticut.

MR. SCHIFF: So you left on December 30?

MS. HICKS: Thirtieth, yes, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: And who was still at Mar-a-Lago when you left, as best you can recall?

MS. HICKS: I -- I don't know.

MR. SCHIFF: You said there were some arriving as others might be leaving?

MS. HICKS: Yes. It was all the holidays. We were all sort of new. So there was a lot of coming and going and overlap of folks.

MR. SCHIFF: And do you remember who was arriving when you were leaving?

MS. HICKS: I don't know.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know which senior members of the Presidential transition team Flynn related his conversations with the Russian Ambassador regarding the U.S. sanctions and Russia's decision not to escalate to?

MS. HICKS: I don't know.

MR. SCHIFF: You have to stay it out loud.

MS. HICKS: I don't know.

MR. SCHIFF: And I think, Counsel, you, with respect to my colleague's question -- I just want to be sure -- instruct your client not to answer at this point a

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question about whether she discussed with President-elect Trump any of General Flynn's conversations with Ambassador Kislyak?

MR. TROUT: I thought that was a different question.

MR. SCHIFF: Well, let me ask that question then. Were you present for any discussion with the President-elect during your time in Mar-a-Lago about General Flynn's communications with the Russian Ambassador?

MS. HICKS: I don't remember any conversations that I was a part of.

MR. SCHIFF: I'm sorry; you don't remember any conversation that you were a part of with?

MS. HICKS: With the President-elect concerning General Flynn's conversations with the Russian Ambassador.

MR. SCHIFF: Mr. Swalwell?

MR. SWALWELL: With respect to WikiLeaks, you mentioned earlier that you had knowledge that Donald Trump Jr. was contacted by direct message from WikiLeaks. Did his father know about that contact?

MS. HICKS: Not that I know of at the time.

MR. SWALWELL: When did you learn that Donald Trump Sr. knew about Donald Trump Jr. being contacted by WikiLeaks?

MS. HICKS: When it was publicly reported, well after January 20th.

MR. SWALWELL: Who is Bob Foresman?

MS. HICKS: I don't know, but I know why you're asking.

MR. SWALWELL: Why do you think I'm asking?

MS. HICKS: I think I know. There's an email from Rhona Graff to me and Keith Schiller or maybe just to Keith, that Keith forwarded to me, that outlined messages at the office for Mr. Trump. And he was one of the people listed. There

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were four people; he was one of them. And I believe it said in the email that he had big ties to Russia.

MR. SWALWELL: What were you to do with that message passed to you from Mr. Schiller?

MS. HICKS: Keith asked me to print it.

MR. SWALWELL: Print it for who?

MS. HICKS: For Mr. Trump.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you do that?

MS. HICKS: I don't remember doing it, but I assume I did.

MR. SWALWELL: Did Mr. Trump call Mr. Foresman?

MS. HICKS: I don't know.

MR. SWALWELL: Has Mr. Trump ever talked about Mr. Foresman?

MS. HICKS: Not to me.

MR. SWALWELL: To who?

MS. HICKS: I -- I wouldn't know of any other conversations that didn't include me.

MR. SWALWELL: And the email that we're referring to, let's mark it as -- I think, is 6 next in order.

[Hicks Exhibit No. 6

Was marked for identification.]

MR. SWALWELL: He is described as an extremely well connected banker with big ties to Russia. Is that right?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. CONAWAY: We have to take a break.

MR. SWALWELL: What time are we coming back, Chairman.

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MR. CONAWAY: Let's vote and come right back.

[Recess.]

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[6:00 p.m.]

[REDACTED] Mr. Swalwell.

MR. SWALWELL: Thank you.

Ms. Hicks, welcome back.

MS. HICKS: Thank you.

MR. SWALWELL: You were shown when we first began ■ picture of ■
March 31 meeting, 2016, at Mr. Trump's hotel in Washington, D.C.MS. HICKS: I wasn't shown a picture of that, but I know what you're
referencing.

MR. SWALWELL: I thought you were shown a picture of that. No?

MS. HICKS: But I know what you're referencing. Go ahead.

MR. SWALWELL: You've seen that picture before?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: And in the picture it depicts, among other people,
Mr. Papadopoulos. Is that right?

MS. HICKS: According to news reports, yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. Well, let's -- I'll get you the picture.

MR. TROUT: It's okay, I think we've seen it.

MS. HICKS: I'm just saying, I don't believe I've ever met Mr. Papadopoulos,
so I'm relying on others to identify him and that's what's been reported. That's all.MR. SWALWELL: Were you in the room when Mr. Papadopoulos was in
the room?MS. HICKS: I answered these questions earlier. I was present throughout
the day for the meetings that were held in that space, primarily greeting people as
they came in and out. I don't remember sitting for the meeting. I was speaking

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with reporters that Mr. Trump was meeting with after.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you hear Mr. Papadopoulos make an offer for Mr. Trump to connect and meet with Mr. Putin?

MS. HICKS: I did not.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you hear anybody else talk about that? Did you hear anyone else talk about Mr. Papadopoulos' offer for Mr. Trump to meet with Mr. Putin?

MS. HICKS: I did not.

MR. SWALWELL: All right. So now you have the photo in front of you. We'll mark that as next in order, which I believe is exhibit 7.

[Hicks Exhibit No. 7

Was marked for identification.]

MR. SWALWELL: Do you recognize this picture?

MS. HICKS: Yes, I've seen the photo before.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. Well, did you also see this in realtime, this scene?

MS. HICKS: Yes. I was there that day, yes.

MR. SWALWELL: So if we're looking at the picture, clearly you're not pictured. No woman is pictured, but you certainly are not. Where would you have been in this frame?

MS. HICKS: Like I said, I didn't stay for the meeting. I was in and out. I was in another room meeting with reporters that were coming to meet with Mr. Trump after this meeting.

MR. SWALWELL: Where would you have been when you were in the room?

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MS. HICKS: I would have been on the right-hand side of the frame, probably in a seat against the wall behind this person identified as Kubic.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. Who else would have been out of the frame of this photo that you recall being there?

MS. HICKS: Sam Clovis, potentially Stephen Miller. I don't know who took the photo, whoever that person was, maybe Dan Scavino. I don't know.

MR. SWALWELL: We've asked you today about a number of --

MS. HICKS: Corey was present.

MR. SWALWELL: Corey Lewandowski?

MS. HICKS: Yeah.

MR. SWALWELL: We've asked you today about a number of what we'll call Russian approaches to members of the family and the campaign, including and not limited to Michael Cohen, Carter Page, George Papadopoulos, Don Jr., Richard Stone, and Michael Flynn.

MS. HICKS: I think you mean Roger Stone.

MR. SWALWELL: Who'd I say?

MS. HICKS: Richard.

MR. SWALWELL: Richard Stone, yeah. Roger, yeah. Roger Stone.

You are correct.

So approaches made by Michael Cohen, Carter Page, George Papadopoulos, Don Jr., Roger Stone, and General Flynn. Is it your testimony today that you were not aware at all during the campaign that these individuals had been approached by Russians?

MS. HICKS: That's my testimony, yeah.

MR. SWALWELL: Is that the truth?

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MS. HICKS: If I'm testifying.

MR. SWALWELL: Were you aware of anyone being approached by Russians who was either at The Trump Organization, in the Trump family, or on the Trump campaign?

MS. HICKS: Not during the campaign.

MR. SWALWELL: How about independent of press reporting?

MR. TROUT: Excuse me.

[Discussion off the record.]

MS. HICKS: Yeah. I mean, I guess your definition of "approached" depends. But I received an email from somebody from the embassy asking about the candidate participating in an interview, which I responded to with a template decline.

MR. SWALWELL: Was there ever discussions among the campaign or with the candidate about connecting candidate Trump with Vladimir Putin?

MS. HICKS: Not that I was aware of.

MR. SWALWELL: Were you aware -- who's Rick Dearborn?

MS. HICKS: Rick was the chief of staff for Senator Sessions. And then -- and I don't know what his title was on the campaign, but he was helping mostly get things together, at least my understanding was, for the convention. And then he ran the transition and then worked in the White House.

MR. SWALWELL: Were you aware of Rick Dearborn on May 10, 2016, receiving an email whose subject line was "Kremlin connection"?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Were you aware of Rick Dearborn sending an email to Paul Manafort, Rick Gates, and Jared Kushner on May 17 titled "Russian backdoor

overture and dinner invite"?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SWALWELL: You mentioned a February 2016 email that you received from the Russian Embassy. Do you remember talking about that earlier?

MS. HICKS: Yes. I just mentioned it.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. Is that an email that you'd be willing to produce to the committee?

MR. TROUT: We'll talk to the campaign about it.

MR. SWALWELL: Do you have access to that email anymore?

MS. HICKS: I don't have access to it, but it's been presented to me in other settings.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you go to Scotland with candidate Trump?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you take the Trump plane?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Was Brexit at all discussed while you were visiting Scotland?

MS. HICKS: Yes. I believe the vote took place overnight while we were flying, so when we landed and arrived there, that was the news. And the candidate gave a press conference at an event a couple hours later and spoke about it publicly.

MR. SWALWELL: Did the candidate or anyone on the campaign team meet with Nigel Farage on that trip?

MR. TROUT: Congressman, it's 10 after 6. We're now talking about Brexit, not Russia. We've been here all day.

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MR. SWALWELL: Ms. Hicks, are you declining to answer?

MS. HICKS: I'm not aware of any meeting with Nigel Farage.

MR. SCHIFF: Counsel, it's a relevant question. And you may not know the relevance of it, but we do. It'd be quicker if you just let her answer.

MR. TROUT: Well, at a certain point we're going to just have to conclude this because we have been here all day.

MR. SWALWELL: You wouldn't be the first member of the team to do that.

MR. TROUT: We think we've been pretty patient. So we'd like to wrap this up. But at least to us questions about Brexit and leaders of the United Kingdom don't seem to make a lot of sense to us. But if you want to --

MS. HICKS: I'm not aware of any meeting.

MR. SWALWELL: Was Alexander Nix a part of that trip?

MS. HICKS: Not that I'm aware of.

MR. SWALWELL: Anyone with Cambridge Analytica?

MS. HICKS: Not that I'm aware of.

MR. SWALWELL: Are you familiar with the NRA convention in Kentucky in 2016, May 2016?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. Did you go to that?

MS. HICKS: I did.

MR. SWALWELL: Who accompanied you?

MS. HICKS: I accompanied the candidate. I believe the other folks traveling were Donald Trump Jr., Eric Trump, Corey Lewandowski, maybe Dan Scavino.

MR. SWALWELL: You get down there on the campaign plane?

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MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Did Donald Trump Jr. arrive with you on the campaign plane?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall specifically remembering him on the plane. We obviously had interactions at the event, but --

MR. SWALWELL: Did Mr. Trump, candidate Trump, ever meet Alexander Torshin on that trip?

MS. HICKS: I don't know who that is.

MR. SWALWELL: Did Mr. Trump ever meet with any Russians on that trip?

MS. HICKS: The only person I remember meeting -- him meeting with was Mitch McConnell prior to his speech. He took a few photos afterwards, a notable one was, I think, Rick Perry, Secretary Perry now, who was quite critical of him during the primaries, and they had a nice exchange. But I don't recall any Russians.

MR. SWALWELL: Did Don Jr. ever discuss any meetings he had on that trip with Alexander Torshin?

MS. HICKS: Not with me.

MR. SWALWELL: Did candidate Trump meet with Maria Butina on that trip?

MS. HICKS: Also don't know who that is. Sorry.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you leave that trip with candidate Trump?

MS. HICKS: I did, yeah. We arrived. He sat in a green room for about 20 minutes. He spoke, took some pictures on his way out, and we left and returned to New York.

MR. SWALWELL: Are you familiar with a trip that Donald Trump Jr. took in October 2016 to Paris?

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MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: How are you familiar?

MS. HICKS: News reports.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you know he was going to Paris prior to him leaving?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Did his father know?

MS. HICKS: Not that I know of.

MR. SWALWELL: Once he returned, did he talk about the trip?

MS. HICKS: The first I learned of the trip was, I believe, in November from a press inquiry.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you tell Don Jr. about that press inquiry?

MS. HICKS: I believe I sent him the inquiry I received. I don't remember having a conversation with him. Actually, that's not true. Actually, he might have called me after I sent him the email saying that he spoke about the trip prior. I don't know if it was an email or if we spoke on the phone. I sort of recall a conversation now. He spoke about the trip prior to going and cleared it with Kellyanne and Steve Bannon, Kellyanne Conway and Steve Bannon.

MR. SWALWELL: So is an act like that, based on your experience, traveling outside the country, something that Don Jr. would have had to have cleared and received approval for?

MS. HICKS: From the campaign leadership or from his father?

MR. SWALWELL: Campaign leadership.

MS. HICKS: I don't know if he did it as a courtesy or if he was actually seeking permission. I don't know that he actually needed anybody's permission. But that was what was relayed to me.

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MR. SWALWELL: And again, "cleared" was your words, right, not mine?

MS. HICKS: That was -- those were the words, I believe, that he used.

MR. SWALWELL: Did candidate Trump know about Don Jr. going over to Paris?

MS. HICKS: You already asked that, and I said not that I'm aware of.

MR. SWALWELL: When did he learn?

MS. HICKS: I imagine he learned from press reports. I don't know, and I've never spoken with him about it.

MR. SWALWELL: In July 2016, did you go to Cleveland for the convention?

MS. HICKS: I did.

MR. SWALWELL: How did you get there?

MS. HICKS: With the candidate.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you learn about a platform committee issue the week before the convention?

MS. HICKS: Not that I recall.

MR. SWALWELL: When you were at the convention, were you aware of any issues around what is referred to today as the Ukraine amendment?

MS. HICKS: Generally speaking, no. My only knowledge of that is from press reporting and conversations about that reporting.

MR. SWALWELL: At the time, were you receiving inquiries from the press about the Ukraine amendment?

MS. HICKS: If I was, I wasn't engaging directly on them. I wasn't at the convention, and I wasn't technically part of the press or communications team handling the events surrounding the convention. I was dedicated to the candidate, and I had no knowledge of the activity of the delegates, the meetings that were

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taking place, the platforms, and other official activities surrounding the convention outside of the candidate's involvement.

MR. SWALWELL: But you were in Cleveland?

MS. HICKS: We traveled there Monday night for Melania Trump's speech and immediately departed. We returned Wednesday afternoon, saw -- we did an interview and saw Eric Trump's speech Wednesday evening. And then Thursday the candidate spoke, Thursday night, and we departed early Friday.

MR. SWALWELL: So I'm trying to understand, did you or did you not receive any inquiries about the Ukraine amendment at that time?

MS. HICKS: I don't know. I'm sure I did, given that I was a, you know, press secretary of the campaign. It's just not something I would have even spoken to anybody about. I would have just forwarded it along to the people at the convention.

MR. SWALWELL: Are you familiar with a Russian social media platform called VK?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Have you ever heard of it?

MS. HICKS: Not to my knowledge, no.

MR. SWALWELL: Has anyone ever suggested -- did anyone ever suggest during the campaign that candidate Trump join a Russian social media platform to connect with Russian Americans living in the United States?

MS. HICKS: I don't know.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. Dan Scavino was responsible for social media during the campaign?

MS. HICKS: Yes. That sounds like a very broad description, though, and

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you'd have to ask Dan and Brad how they split up their responsibilities. I know Dan's responsibilities encompass handling the content on Mr. Trump's platforms, but aside from that, you'd have to speak to Dan and Brad about what the differences were in their roles.

MR. SWALWELL: Did candidate Trump ever express an opinion to you or others about FBI Director Comey during the course of the campaign?

MS. HICKS: Not an opinion of him personally --

MR. SWALWELL: What did he say?

MS. HICKS: -- but certainly weighed in on the actions that were taken during that time period.

MR. SWALWELL: What did he say?

MS. HICKS: Nothing privately that he hasn't said publicly, very publicly. Just about his analysis of the press conference that was given -- what was it, July 7? -- and then the followups.

MR. SWALWELL: Well, let me ask, because I don't recall candidate Trump saying much publicly about Mr. Comey and the press conference. I recall him speaking a lot about Secretary Clinton. What did he say about Mr. Comey during the campaign as it relates to the press conference?

MS. HICKS: I think he did speak publicly about it.

MR. SWALWELL: No, I'm asking what he said privately.

MS. HICKS: I told you that I don't believe he said anything privately that he hasn't said publicly. I think he felt that he went out of his way to outline alleged or perceived wrongdoings only to not take any action, and that was interesting and somewhat shocking to the candidate.

MR. SWALWELL: Now, you recall in early October when Mr. Comey sent a

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letter to Congress announcing that he was reopening the Hillary Clinton investigation. Is that right?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Do you want to yield back or do you want me --

MR. KING: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. Thanks.

What was candidate Trump's feelings privately when Mr. Comey sent that letter to Congress?

MS. HICKS: Again, I can't recall anything expressed privately that wasn't expressed very publicly.

MR. SWALWELL: Well, very publicly I remember him praising James Comey, words to the effect of, don't we love Director Comey. Do you -- is that what you recall?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall that specific quote.

MR. SWALWELL: What do you recall?

MS. HICKS: But I recall he was noting that this was sort of an extraordinary step to take given the timing and what had previously been said about this investigation and the subject of the investigation by that individual and, I think, was as curious as everyone else what it meant.

MR. SWALWELL: This is what you recall candidate Trump saying privately?

MS. HICKS: Yes. There are discussions about the coverage, the news coverage of that letter and the response afterwards.

I also recall what he said publicly, which, you know, you obviously have access to, that this was, I think he said maybe a very brave thing to do, something

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along those lines.

MR. SWALWELL: So you would characterize candidate Trump's feelings about Director Comey in October of 2016 as being a brave person. Is that right?

MS. HICKS: That's not what I said. I said that he characterized the letter that was sent as a brave thing to do. I said at the start of this questioning that I don't recall any personal opinions about Comey that were shared.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you have any notice or was there any conversation prior to Director Comey reopening the investigation that this was something that might occur?

MS. HICKS: No. I recall finding out that this was happening from a tweet from a reporter that was sent via email, I believe.

MR. SWALWELL: Was candidate Trump at this time, in October 2016, in contact with Rudy Giuliani?

MS. HICKS: Yes. Rudy was – traveled with us often.

MR. SWALWELL: Did Rudy Giuliani ever talk about any contacts that he had at the New York field office of the FBI?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall any specific details like the New York field office.

MR. SWALWELL: What details do you recall?

MS. HICKS: I think generally just conversations about, you know, rank-and-file members of the FBI being agitated or frustrated with the conduct surrounding that investigation and that it didn't result in any action being taken given all of the things that were outlined by Comey at the press conference.

MR. SWALWELL: Did Mr. Giuliani do anything at all to suggest that he had knowledge that the Clinton investigation was going to be reopened?

MS. HICKS: Not that I heard.

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MR. SWALWELL: Did candidate Trump ever suggest to you or anyone around you that he had knowledge that the Clinton investigation was going to be reopened?

MS. HICKS: No. I think he was as shocked as anybody when this happened.

MR. SWALWELL: Was he happy when the investigation was reopened?

MS. HICKS: No, I don't think happy is accurate.

MR. SWALWELL: Was he sad?

MS. HICKS: I think I said before he was as curious as everybody else as to what this meant.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you ever receive a defensive briefing from the FBI prior to Election Day?

MS. HICKS: No, not prior to Election Day.

MR. SWALWELL: Do you know what I mean by defensive briefing?

MS. HICKS: I do now, yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you ever meet at all with the FBI prior to Election Day about outside potential threats to the campaign?

MS. HICKS: The only meeting I had with the FBI prior to Election Day that I can recall is in regards to a background interview.

MR. SWALWELL: Why were they conducting -- are you talking about during the transition period? No, you said before election.

MS. HICKS: Oh, sorry. Before -- sorry. I'm thinking inauguration day. Excuse me. I had never -- I don't recall speaking to the FBI or anybody being contacted by the FBI prior --

MR. SWALWELL: Were you aware of whether anyone on the campaign

had received a defensive briefing from the FBI about potential threats to the campaign prior to Election Day?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. Do you recall an intelligence briefing provided to President-elect Trump by Directors Clapper, Brennan, and Comey?

MS. HICKS: After the election?

MR. SWALWELL: Before inauguration day, yes.

MS. HICKS: Yes. Yeah.

MR. SWALWELL: Was that at Trump Tower?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Were you at Trump Tower that day?

MS. HICKS: I was.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you talk to President-elect Trump after that briefing?

MS. HICKS: Go ahead. Do you want to say that this is --

MR. TROUT: I think this is -- goes to the question that you previously asked, and we took a -- took under advisement. So we're going to have her answer that.

MR. SWALWELL: Ms. Hicks, are you refusing to answer whether you talked to President-elect Trump after he met with Directors Comey, Brennan, and Clapper during the transition?

MS. HICKS: No. I'm going to answer the question. I was just --

MR. TROUT: No. I said we're going to have her answer that, was my statement.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. That's better.

MS. HICKS: I did speak to him after the briefing in the evening. I didn't see

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him after the briefing, but I spoke to him after receiving a news alert from the Associated Press that they had an exclusive interview following the Comey-Clapper-Brennan briefing with President-elect Trump. This was a news alert on several levels to me.

So I called Mr. Trump and asked if he had given an interview to the Associated Press, and he said that Julie Pace, a reporter from the AP, had called his phone. He answered. And so he gave her a brief interview.

My conversation with him was primarily about not taking calls from reporters, certainly not without looping me in, and that now a lot of other reporters were going to be calling his phone and to not answer.

But I don't recall any specifics of the conversation about the briefing itself. And it is obviously conflated with, you know, that report that I read and a lot of other things since then that have been reported, so --

MR. SWALWELL: Were you present for the briefing?

MS. HICKS: I was not, no.

MR. SWALWELL: Did Mr. Trump express any opinions to you after that briefing about Director Comey?

MS. HICKS: He did not, no.

MR. SWALWELL: Did he express any opinions to you after that briefing about Director Clapper?

MS. HICKS: Not that I recall.

MR. SWALWELL: Did he express any opinions after that briefing to you about Director Brennan?

MS. HICKS: Not that I recall.

MR. SWALWELL: Did President-elect Trump discuss with you the dossier

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that was presented to him, or brought up to him during that briefing?

MS. HICKS: Not until days later when I received a press inquiry about that being presented to him. I asked him if this was, in fact, true, and he had said that, you know, there was something shown to him, or mentioned to him at the end of the more comprehensive briefing about the election meddling.

MR. SWALWELL: And when you say you asked him if it was true, are you saying did you ask him if him being presented with a dossier was true, or did you ask him if what was alleged in the dossier was true?

MS. HICKS: I asked him if him being presented with that information was true.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you ever ask him if what was alleged in the dossier was true?

MS. HICKS: I didn't have to. He said that it wasn't, and I knew things that I was reading about -- to be totally honest, I've never read through the whole thing. But certain things that I know to be included in that dossier, I know to be false. And as they pertained to Mr. Trump, he has obviously adamantly denied all aspects of the dossier as it pertains to him, and I have no reason to believe otherwise.

MR. SWALWELL: What do you know to be false that's alleged in the dossier?

MS. HICKS: There were a couple of things that I had been dealing with on the press end of things in September and October that, obviously, once the dossier came out, I knew had been, you know, cherry-picked and pitched to reporters or, you know, reporters had pulled out of whatever they had been provided.

Specifically, the most common piece of information was the alleged connection between The Trump Organization and a server for a Russian bank,

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Alpha Bank.

MR. SWALWELL: Any other allegations in the dossier that you knew to be false?

MS. HICKS: The piece, I guess, about Michael Cohen traveling to Prague on certain dates. He was in California on those dates. Again, I didn't -- I've never read it, so I can't say what else for sure, but those are two examples of things.

MR. SWALWELL: So how do you know that it's false that The Trump Organization's server was connecting with Alpha Bank?

MS. HICKS: Because, as I was seeing these reporter inquiries, I had conversations with The Trump Organization IT team, the third-party vendor that was responsible for coordinating that kind of traffic, and that documented a lot of the logs that accounted for the traffic that was being described, and had data to support their conclusion that this was just basically spam, or, I guess -- I think what they called it was, like, lookup traffic, but that it wasn't any kind of communication.

I held several conference calls with the reporters from various outlets and those folks from the IT team and Sendine (ph), who is the third-party vendor that arranges for things like, you know, hotel marketing emails, which might account for some of that kind of traffic.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you tell Mr. Trump that there were inquiries about Alpha Bank conducting lookups with Trump Tower?

MS. HICKS: I did, yes.

MR. SWALWELL: What was his response?

MS. HICKS: He had no idea what I was talking about.

MR. SWALWELL: You mean technically?

MS. HICKS: Both. Just, generally speaking, all of it, that there was some

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communication between servers, the party alleged to be involved, Alpha Bank, the IT folks. And I think he was just sort of at a loss for how this could possibly be a story we were dealing with.

MR. SWALWELL: You also said that you knew Michael Cohen traveling to Prague was false. How do you know that Michael Cohen did not travel to Prague? You said he was in California. How do you know he was in California?

MS. HICKS: I just said on those -- on the dates, I guess, that are alleged in the dossier. Because I think he was there with his son, and the people he was visiting have said as much on the record. And I also know that Reince Priebus asked to see his passport, and it did not have a stamp in it for Prague anywhere.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you ask Michael Cohen about this allegation?

MS. HICKS: I don't recall questioning him directly, but I was present when others questioned him.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you -- who questioned him?

MS. HICKS: I just said Reince Priebus.

MR. SWALWELL: You said others though, but anyone other than Reince Priebus?

MS. HICKS: Reince Priebus was there; Steve Bannon was there; Mr. Trump was there. I don't recall Mr. Trump questioning him necessarily. It's certainly possible. But there was a phone conversation and then he came into the office.

MR. SWALWELL: Was Mr. Trump concerned about the allegation of Mr. Cohen traveling to Prague?

MS. HICKS: Not particularly. I think Michael said it wasn't true, and proved that pretty quickly.

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MR. SWALWELL: Okay. Did you know that Mr. Cohen traveled to London in October 2016?

MS. HICKS: I didn't know that.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. And are you familiar that you can travel to London and then move around in Europe and never have your passport stamped because you're in what they call "the zone"?

MS. HICKS: I'm not familiar with travel -- European travel, but hope to be if we ever wrap up here.

MR. SWALWELL: Any other allegation between the -- other than those two, that you knew to be false that were in the dossier?

MS. HICKS: Again, I didn't read the dossier, so I can only say what others have denied.

MR. KING: Do you have any idea how long you're going to go?

MR. SWALWELL: Is it your time again, Mr. King?

MR. KING: I'm just wondering how long you're planning on going. That's all.

Adam, do you have any idea how long you're going to go?

MR. SCHIFF: I've just got kind of a lightning round of cleanup questions.

MR. KING: Any idea on time?

MR. SCHIFF: Mine won't take that long. I don't know how much more --

MR. SWALWELL: I've got about 10 more minutes.

Did you want a break, Ms. Hicks?

MS. HICKS: No, that's okay. Thanks.

MR. KING: Eric, you're back up, I guess.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. You're yielding back to me?

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MR. KING: Yeah.

MR. SWALWELL: So after the intelligence briefing with Mr. Trump where the dossier was presented, up until Inauguration Day, did Mr. Trump ever express an opinion about Mr. Comey?

MS. HICKS: Not that I recall.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you tell Mr. Schiller to take a letter over to the FBI Director announcing that he was being fired?

MR. TROUT: This is after the inauguration.

MR. SWALWELL: Well, I'm going to ask and she can refuse to answer, but we're going to create a record.

MR. TROUT: She's not going to answer that.

MR. SWALWELL: Ms. Hicks, are you refusing to answer whether you gave Mr. Schiller the letter to take to the FBI building for Mr. Comey's firing?

MS. HICKS: Following the directions of the White House, as I've done for the last several hours.

MR. SWALWELL: Were you with President Trump on July 8, 2017, when a statement for Donald Trump Jr. regarding the June 9 meeting was drafted?

MR. TROUT: Congressman, we have made it clear —

MR. SCHIFF: Counsel, we need to establish a record. You can just say we refuse to answer that question. We need to make a record.

MR. TROUT: We are wasting time.

MR. SCHIFF: You're wasting time, counsel.

MR. TROUT: It is after 6:30, and we're just not going to stay.

MS. HICKS: It's a blanket decline to answer after January 20, so that's for the record. And if there's anything else --

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MR. SWALWELL: For subpoena in contempt of Congress process, you have to make a record. Otherwise, it's not clear what is being declined and what is not.

MR. KING: Is there a citation for that?

MR. TROUT: We should have been able to make the record long ago so that we could have been out of here. There have been repetitive questions. We've been here for a very long period of time, and we've got a put a wrap on this.

MR. SWALWELL: Counsel, there's a lot more detail I'd go into, but on the subjects, if she's just going to decline to answer, I will move on. But for our record and for the consideration of contempt of Congress, we do have to ask.

MR. TROUT: Okay.

MR. KING: Is there a citation for that that you have to ask every detailed question? Can't you just say she's declining to answer every question?

MR. SWALWELL: You were here for Mr. Bannon's interview, which lasted twice as long as this.

MR. KING: He was under subpoena, and also Bannon was not a White House employee.

MR. SCHIFF: She should be under subpoena. But in any event, let's just try to wrap up.

MR. KING: Are you going to go through a whole litany of questions or --

MR. SCHIFF: We're not going to go through a whole litany of questions, but we do want a clean record.

MR. SWALWELL: Ms. Hicks, did you --

MR. TROUT: Why don't you send it to us and we'll make it part of the record.

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MR. SCHIFF: You know, it's late. We're all tired. Let's just ask the questions and get done. I don't think this is going to take that long if you don't keep interrupting.

MR. SWALWELL: Ms. Hicks, did you say on a conference call that included Mark Corrolo (ph) that emails written by Donald Trump Jr. about the Trump Tower meeting will never get out?

MR. TROUT: Same answer. She's not going to answer this question.

MR. SWALWELL: Ms. Hicks, I just need to hear from you, or are you refusing to answer?

MS. HICKS: Following the directions of the White House, I will only be responding to questions that pertain to the time period prior to Inauguration Day.

MR. SWALWELL: I'll yield to Mr. Schiff.

MR. SCHIFF: I'm going to be very quick with these. Mostly will be a yes or no, I hope.

MS. HICKS: A lightning round sounds fun. This is like Tucker Carlson on a Friday night.

MR. SCHIFF: Oh, please don't compare me to Tucker Carlson.

MS. HICKS: Sorry. Sorry. Rachel Maddow. Sorry. Wrong crowd.

MR. SCHIFF: Okay. Mr. Giuliani made some comments and I can't remember whether it was before or after the Comey letter 10 days out that he knew this was coming. Did he ever indicate to you, in your presence, that he had a preview that the Comey letter was coming?

MS. HICKS: He did not. I already answered these questions.

MR. SCHIFF: Did you ever discuss the hacked emails with Corey Lewandowski?

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MS. HICKS: I'm sure we did, yes. I don't recall any specific conversations.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you recall any conversation with him about Russia being behind the hack?

MS. HICKS: I don't. No, I don't.

MR. SCHIFF: The comment that candidate Trump made, "Hey, Russia, if you're listening, hack Hillary Clinton's emails," did you ever learn that someone had suggested that he say that?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SCHIFF: So you're not aware of whether that was something he said spontaneously, or that was something that was recommended to him to say publicly?

MS. HICKS: My understanding is that it was very spontaneous.

MR. SCHIFF: Did you ever discuss with Mr. Lewandowski or anyone else in the campaign or with candidate Trump the propriety of campaigning on the hacked emails when they were the product of a foreign hack?

MS. HICKS: I think we went through this earlier. I don't think anybody had any reservations about using public information to our benefit.

MR. SCHIFF: Some of the other candidates, like Marco Rubio, denounced the use of foreign-acquired hacked emails.

MS. HICKS: I didn't see anybody protesting the use of Mr. Trump's illegally obtained tax returns, so I didn't think there was any difference, but --

MR. SCHIFF: So that was never -- you never discussed the propriety of it? It was never an issue for anyone in the Trump campaign?

MS. HICKS: Not that I recall.

MR. SCHIFF: Were you ever present for conversations between Mr. Stone

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and Mr. Trump during the campaign?

MS. HICKS: I was present for a handful of phone conversations. I've actually only met Roger Stone, I think once, maybe twice, which shows you sort of his involvement in the campaign, but --

MR. SCHIFF: So when you were present for those conversations, you were present with Mr. Trump when Mr. Stone was on the other end of the phone?

MS. HICKS: Yes. Yes, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: And did any of those conversations involve either WikiLeaks, Julian Assange, Guccifer 2, or Russia?

MS. HICKS: No, not that I recall.

MR. SCHIFF: How much interaction did you have with Sam Clovis during the campaign?

MS. HICKS: A decent amount initially. He was our Iowa cochair, and that was our primary focus initially. And then he transitioned to sort of more of a policy role, and we exchanged emails pretty frequently.

MR. SCHIFF: And was he overseeing --

MS. HICKS: He was also a surrogate on TV when we didn't really have many.

MR. SCHIFF: Was he also overseeing Mr. Papadopoulos and Mr. Page?

MS. HICKS: I don't -- like I said before, I sort of explained what I knew about the formation of the committee, its existence and the folks on it. I wasn't aware of any reporting structure.

I knew that Sam was the person that put together the committee. Not sure what kind of vetting measures he took, or how that group came to be, other than seeing their names on a list and then the convening of the one meeting. But I'm not

aware of who reported to who or that there was a reporting structure technically.

MR. SCHIFF: Mr. Papadopoulos has acknowledged in his plea that he was made aware by Russians and Russian intermediaries that they had possession of these stolen emails. If Mr. Papadopoulos was going to inform people within the chain of that information, would that start with Mr. Clovis?

MS. HICKS: I don't know who else he was communicating with on the campaign, but it seems like from news reports that he was in touch with Sam. I don't know.

MR. SCHIFF: Anyone else you know that he was in touch with apart from that meeting in which you saw the photograph?

MS. HICKS: I've seen news reports, so I can speculate, but I'm not definitively aware of any communications that I had knowledge of at the time.

MR. SCHIFF: I know you said you hadn't been to Russia so you weren't on the trip that Mr. Schiller made with Mr. Trump to Russia. Were you part of any discussions over whether women were offered to be sent up to Mr. Trump's room on that trip?

MS. HICKS: Just the claim made in the dossier and Mr. Trump's very strong denial.

MR. SCHIFF: There was some reporting about Mr. Schiller's comments to someone in the press, and I don't know whether this was during the campaign, transition, or after. Did it ever come to your attention that an offer had been made to send women to Mr. Trump's room?

MS. HICKS: I believe that's something he shared with one of the committees that was then leaked out. I've never spoken to Mr. Schiller about that.

MR. SCHIFF: Did that issue ever come to your attention prior to the

election?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SCHIFF: Or during the transition?

MS. HICKS: No. Again, my only knowledge of this is the claim that's made in the dossier, and Mr. Trump's very strong denial.

MR. KING: Can you yield for a friendly moment?

MR. SCHIFF: Yeah.

MR. KING: I'm going to have to leave, something both you can understand. I have to do a media engagement, and so I'm going up there now. I know sometimes that takes priority. So I'll be kind to you guys. Don't worry.

MR. SWALWELL: We'll do the rebuttal.

MR. KING: What's that? Oh, I'm sure you probably did it already, for all I know. But seriously. So anyway, Ms. Hicks, I want to thank you very much for your testimony. Appreciate your patience.

MS. HICKS: Thank you very much. Have a good night. And it was very nice to see you. Bye.

MR. SCHIFF: At the Mayflower Hotel, did you observe any interaction between Ambassador Kislyak and Jeff Sessions?

MS. HICKS: I did not.

MR. SCHIFF: Did you know who Ambassador Kislyak was at the time?

MS. HICKS: No, I did not.

MR. SCHIFF: So you would not have recognized who he would have been meeting with?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SCHIFF: With respect to the Ukraine amendment at the convention,

there was a back and forth between one of the campaign personnel and the delegate from Texas who had made the Ukraine amendment. And there was a publicly reported disagreement about what happened. Were you involved in the media on any of that?

MS. HICKS: I already said no.

MR. SCHIFF: You mentioned that the dates in which the dossier referred to Michael Cohen being in Prague you knew to be incorrect. Do you know what Mr. Cohen's other travel in Europe was during the campaign?

MS. HICKS: No.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know whether he went to any other of the travel zone within Europe during the summer of 2016?

MS. HICKS: I don't.

MR. SCHIFF: So you wouldn't be aware whether -- well, let me leave it at that.

MS. HICKS: I think I remember him maybe saying he was in Italy at some point, or had a trip planned to Italy in response to an email maybe about his availability for something. I don't remember exactly. I'm speculating right now, but something about Italy rings a bell, but I don't have access to --

MR. SCHIFF: And you wouldn't be aware of anywhere else within the shangan (ph) zone he might have gone that would not appear on his passport?

MS. HICKS: I'm in the aware of this zone, and no.

MR. SCHIFF: Okay. Have you ever heard the name Peter Smith?

MS. HICKS: Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: Had you heard the name of Peter Smith during the course of the campaign or transition?

MS. HICKS: No. I first heard his name in June of 2017 in a press inquiry I received.

MR. SCHIFF: Were you aware of anyone, either affiliated with the campaign or outside the campaign, who was attempting to locate either the missing Hillary emails or any hacked emails online?

MS. HICKS: We went over this about 6 hours ago in the Rebekah Mercer line of questioning. I wasn't aware of anybody associated with the campaign that was actually trying to locate those emails.

MR. SCHIFF: And what about people who, like Peter Smith, may have been associated with the campaign or may not have been associated with the campaign?

MS. HICKS: I don't know Peter Smith. I first learned of his name a year after the emails were publicly released that were not Hillary Clinton's, but somebody who worked with her, and, therefore, I would have no knowledge of Peter Smith trying to obtain emails. I don't know who he is.

MR. SCHIFF: To your knowledge, does Mr. Trump have financial investments in Russia?

MS. HICKS: He does not, to my knowledge.

MR. SCHIFF: And to your knowledge, are Russian banks guaranteeing any of the -- any loans to The Trump Organization or the Kushner properties?

MS. HICKS: I can't speak to the Kushner properties. I'm just not aware of it. In terms of The Trump Organization, I believe the President's accounting firm, which is pretty well-respected, has put out a letter certifying that he has no investments or debt or transactions with any Russian entities.

MR. SCHIFF: And did you --

MS. HICKS: So that's publicly available to you all.

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MR. SCHIFF: Did you ever have a conversation with Mr. Trump about whether his organization had Russian financial backing?

MS. HICKS: Not that I recall, and I think the letter I just described probably speaks to the fact that that's not the case.

MR. SCHIFF: Now, his sons have said, at various times, that Russian money made a disproportionate share of their investment. What is that on the basis of?

MS. HICKS: I don't think it was a quote that said a disproportionate share of their investment. That's a very misleading statement. I believe the quote said that there was money pouring in from Russia.

I've spoken to Don Jr. about what he meant by that quote. The way I read it, and this interpretation was confirmed by Don Jr., is that there were Russians buying luxury apartments in Trump buildings and staying in luxury hotels. That's a source of income for The Trump Organization.

It doesn't mean it's an investment necessarily, or that there's Russian money involved in The Trump Organization. But by nature of what they do, there's going to be transactions that perhaps involve Russians or folks from China or England or Italy. It's New York real estate.

MR. SCHIFF: Well, I'm just trying to get a sense of whether we should believe what the President's son said or that letter that you referred to. Russian money was either pouring in or it wasn't pouring in. When did you have this conversation with -- was it with Don Jr. or with Eric Trump?

MS. HICKS: It was with Don Jr. It was in response to press inquiries at some point during the campaign. I don't recall the exact date. And the letter that I referenced was specifically about investments in Russia or debt, I believe, to

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Russian institutions. But like I said, the letter is publicly available, so you all can go ahead and see what exactly that outlines.

MR. TROUT: Are you getting near the end?

MR. SCHIFF: Yep.

MR. TROUT: Thank you.

MR. SCHIFF: I asked you earlier about whether you were aware of a meeting at Trump Tower -- or I'm sorry, not a meeting at Trump Tower, but a meeting in the UAE that Erik Prince had, and I think you said you were not aware of it at the time. Were you aware of a meeting that Erik Prince had prior to that UAE trip with Steve Bannon on the subject of the UAE?

MS. HICKS: I don't know Erik Prince. I'm not aware of meetings he had or didn't have.

MR. SCHIFF: But you are -- you do know Steve Bannon, but you don't know if Steve Bannon had a meeting with him?

MS. HICKS: I don't. I know he was in Trump Tower one day during the transition, and I believe he met with the President-elect, but I can't confirm that. I wasn't present, and this is not based off of conversations I've had, but news reporting.

MR. TROUT: Were you talking about Erik Prince or Steve Bannon?

MS. HICKS: Erik Prince.

MR. SCHIFF: Okay. I think we're concluded.

██████████ Thanks a lot. We're adjourned.

MS. HICKS: Thank you all very much.

[Whereupon, at 6:55 p.m., the interview was concluded.]

